









The French Generalissimo and the first Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force in France





EUROPEAN HISTORY:

Great Leaders & Landmarks from Early to Modern Times

Volume VI THE GREAT WAR

By

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Publishers' Note

This, the sixth volume of European History, completes a task, which, begun some years before the Great War had cast its evil shadow over the world, has of necessity been profoundly affected by that eatastrophe. In its original plan the underlying scheme of the work was to present a gallery of biographical sketches in four volumes, illustrating the main eurrents of European history "by the lives of men whose names are generally recognized as its high lights"; but even at that stage it was intended, as stated in the Publishers' Note to the first volume, that in some momentous events the strictly biographical form would not always be adhered to.

With the outbreak of the war it was deemed advisable to add two further volumes, abandoning the biographical form altogether. One volume was devoted to an account of the political developments of European history during the nineteenth century—without an adequate knowledge of which it was impossible to understand all the conflicting interests involved in Germany's challenge for world power—and the other devoted to an illustrated record of the war itself. Leaders and Landmarks stand out clearly in each of these concluding volumes, though the stage becomes more and more erowded as the closing acts of the drama are reached.

The first two volumes in the series, it will be remembered, were written by Ai R. Hope Monerieff, author among other works of The World, of To-day, which did for mankind in space what this work dogs for mankind in time. The Rev. H. J. Chaytor, who translated Ferrero's Greatness and Decline of Rome, followed with two volumes bringing the narrative down to the foundations of the German Empire.

To each of these volumes was added an Appendix consisting of a "Chronological Conspectus" and a "Summary of the Great Movements of European History", the Conspectus prepared by Walter Murray, the Summary by F. Harrison, M.A. Then came the fifth

volume by William Collinge, M.A., covering European Political History from the Congress of Vienna to the carliest phases of the Great Wai, and finally the present volume by Edwin Shape Grew, M.A., author of H.a. ville the Bosis and The Stringgle in the Fast, who his endeavoured to present the various phases of that unparalleled stuggle, in something approaching two perspective.

His record has not sufficed by delay. It takes into account the leading documents published since the signing of Peace, not only in the Allied and Associated countries, but also in Germany itself, and bears throughout the impress of a mind singulials well informed regarding the inner meaning of most of the complicated moves in the widely scattered theaties of war.

Every effort has been made to provide that the illustrations may be worthy of the text, and the maps throughout have been prepried with scrupulous regard for accuracy. In the earlier volumes, the great art collections at home and abroad were drawn upon for the portraits and paintings of historical and acheological interest, reproduced in colour and black-and-white. For the present volume a wide choice has been made from the official photographs from various battle fronts, and pictures, by well-known artists, of many of the outstanding incidents in the war on land and sea. The publishers may be permitted a final word of satisfaction that the work, carried on through verys of unexampled stress and difficulty, has thus been brought to a fitting, call.

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THE GREAT WAR

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST BATTLE OF THE MARNE

The First Battle of the Marne, to which the Allies When, of two allies, one conthan had been stipulated

One condition, however, does not ap- army had to be altered too pear to have been made clear between The dominant idea in British pre-

the closing chapter in the last volume of tributes a much smaller military force European History had brought us, is some- than the other, it is assumed that the amaller times called the "miracle of the Marne", military force is placed under the command because here the march of the Germans, of the Generalissimo of the larger That which had every appearance of irresisti- condition was never fulfilled in ita completebility, was arrested, and the footsteps of ness between Great Britain and France their armies turned back, their victory, till 26th April, 1918, when circumstances which had seemed so assured, was wrested enforced it, and, though there were many from them, the blow which they had admirable substitutes for this unity of struck for the leadership of Europe re- command during the four and a half years coiled on themselves, and thenceforward, of war, its absence affected both strategy for four years, until another battle on the and tactics General French went to France same river, they were struggling to escape in command of the British army in a sense the consequences of their first failure in which no French single Army Com-Before examining more closely the causes mander could claim independent leaderwhich led to this reverse of fortune, the ship General Joffre, the French Comevents both strategic and tactical which mander-in-Chief, was in command of six led to the positions on the Marne must be armies, each of which was absolutely at recapitulated Lord Haldane revealed in his disposal, and could be moved in obedi-1010, when his disclosures could have no ence to his orders. But the British army effect on either the conduct or the policy could only be moved after negotiation with of the war, what had been the military its individual commander, though no imarrangement between Great Britain and plication is made by this reservation that France in the event of a German attack General French at any time failed to give on France through Belgium It was that to General Joffre the fullest support, coa British Expeditionary Force should land operation, or obedience. It is to be noted, in France and be mobilized in the neigh- nevertheless, that, just as the French plan bourhood of Maubeuge The mobiliza- of campaign, designed before the German tion, as already has been narrated, took invasion of France began, had to be radiplace, and the force was in position before cally altered because of the German sucit was expected, and in numbers greater cesses, so the part which, in General French's opinion, ought to be played by the British

of a force thr atcning the German communications on the western firml while at the same ume acting as a screen for the protection of the Channel ports The French believed that with the resistance offered by the Belgian army and the Br tish army, time and opportunity would be afforded to strike a successful counter blow at the weal German left flank in the south, and either overwhelm it or snap the link between the two main groups of the German armies Neither of these expectations was realized Both were upset by the action of the Germans, who began by a success beyond the expectations of their adversames, and perhaps beyond their own, but who, in the effort to attain a success still greater, asked of their plan more than it could yield, and paid the penalty of failure by having to abandon the advantage they had won, without the possibility of salving from it any smaller advantage which would contain the seeds of future victory

This review of strategic intentions must be completed by a recapitulation of the disposition of the forces The German armies had been divided into two groups the first which was to secure the quick second was to meet and counter the French forces invading Lorraine The two were group watched Alsace and the Vosges The first group of 16 corps was composed of the First (von kluck), Second (von Bulow) and Third (von Hausen) Armies with strong cavalry The second group (12 corps) consisted of the Fifth (German Crown gen) Army with 2 corps and reserves

the main offensive group, consisting of the as it was now certain that German cavalry

cumpugn strategy of the function which First (Dubail) Army, and the Second (Casthe British army should assume, was that telnau) Army, consisting of 9 corps with 3 reserve divisions then, about \crdun, the Third (Ruffey) Army The Fifth (de Lanrezac) Army, with a corps and a reserve divisions witched the Ardennes as far as the Belgian frontier near Rocros A Fourth (Langle de Cary) Army, of 4 corps and 2 reserve divisions, was the mass of manœuvre held in reserve behind the centre This was the first grouping, and shows that, while the French were not wholly unprepared for the violation of neutrality, they had not believed that the Germans could force the Meuse and take the wide and rapid sweep through the plains of Belgium which, in fact, they accomplished

The French put their plan in operation, and in Lorraine the First and Second Armies, under Dubail and Castelnau, fought their way forward as far as Sourburg by the 10th of August But they had encountered steadily stiffening opposition from the German forces, and Joffre, so far from being able to send in fresh forces to aid them, had been compelled to turn his attention to the invaded north, and divert troops to meet the Germans there Consequently, when Prince Rupprecht and von Heeringen advanced to counter-attack Castelnau and decision, operated through Belgium, the Dubail, the armies under these two French generals were weakened, and had to fall back to positions covering Nancy and Luneconnected by a weak link, and another weak wille The French eavalry had sounded the territory of eastern Belgium almost as far as Luege in the first fortnight of August, without finding confirmation of the great German tide moving westwards It was not till 15th August that Ioffre was completely assured of the character of the German plan. Prince), and Sixth (Bayanan Crown Prince and then he moved de Linrezac and the Rupprecht) Armies The link between the Fifth Army into the angle of the Sambre two was the Fourth (Duke Albrecht of and Meuse between Charleros, Namur, and Wurttemberg) Army of 4 corps, and in the Dinant This army was reinforced by extreme south was the Seventh (Von Heenn- two corps, and in addition another three divisions were taken from the French strik-Against this, reckoning in reverse order, ing force to reinforce the defences of the the French armies in their first grouping north Langle de Cary's army (Fourth) were set out as follows An Alsace group, in reserve was moved up to take the place opposite von Heeringen, of 5 divisions with of the Fifth Army and to connect up with 4 in reserve, along the Lorraine frontier the Third Army in front of Verdun Lastly, a composite force to Arras

21st August (the time at which the British sen) at Dinant. He had also received in-Expeditionary Force, having completed its formation that the British army was being mobilization at Maubeuge, was marching attacked by three German corps, while a northwards), and at this date the French fourth was working round its left flank were far from renouncing their idea of a He was ordered to send General Sordet and successful counter-attack Joffre still thought the French cavilry corps to prevent this that the Germans were not strong enough envelopment. He himself ordered a general to carry out their plan of striking at the retirement, taking with him two reserve Allied left without leaving their centre in divisions which were coming up on the front of de Lanrezac insecure As late as British right This is what General French 22nd August it appears to have been the meant by saying that General de Lanrezac's French belief that it would be possible retirement left the British flank in the air to envelop the Germans north of the Meuse Before the British had begun to withdraw by an advance of the British army and of from Mons the French Fifth Army had de Lanrezac's l'ifth French Army pivoting been retiring for twelve hours on Namur By 23rd August the German The retreat of the British from Mons has surprise had been sprung, and this dream been already described Its last engageable to deploy fully and swiftly

attack, renewed his own attack, and by night-tact on the 27th and 28th, when Sir Douglas fall of the 23rd General de Lanrezac was

was heading a German advance through in the position that his front had everywhere Belgum, General d'Amade was sent with been driven in, his flank threatened by the fall of Namur, and by the appearance of These movements were not completed till a new German army (Third-von Hau

had disappeared into thin sir Some 400,000 ment of importance was that which General German troops were advancing on the Smith-Dorrien fought at Le Cateau, and 270,000 French and British troops in position which, in Lord Fiench's opinion, as exbetween Dinant, Namur, and Mons Thus pressed in his second thoughts of 1010. the French Higher Command had to change ought not to have been undertaken 1 The their plan at the last moment The German losses in the retreat of the British force had General Staff, in the first deployment of been heavy, but they might have been forces, had outmanguvred the Allies by a heavier had the Germans been competent combination of treachery and skill, and on to organize a cavalry pursuit. Their neglect the critical left flank the Franco British to do so is in part attributable to their own forces could come into action only piece- exhaustion, but still more to von Kluck's meal against an enemy in superior force and belief that the British army was completely beaten German official reports greatly The first blow, delivered by von Bulow's overestimated the British losses and the stmy (Second), fell on de Lanrezac and the exhaustion of the troops which had endured French Fifth Army (21st-23rd), and de them From the exhaustion they had re-Lanrezac's task in fighting the Battle of the covered and reinforcements had made up Sambre was rendered more difficult by the some of the losses After Le Cateau (26th fall of the fortress of Namur (23rd) The August) Sir John French's retreat had been result of the collapse of this pivot was that directed due south to the Aisne, which was the Germans were given the opportunity safely crossed between Soissons and Comto get up and threaten de Lanrezac's meht pregne on 31st August, and thenceforward flank and communications The French the length of the marches was reduced Von general had to send the 1st Army Corps Kluck turned his attention to some French to protect these communications instead of forces on the British left on 27th August, employing it to counter-attack the Germans, but it was left to von Bulow to use such of and thus a useful striking force was lost his Second Army as he could snare from to him The German commander opposed following up de Lanrezac to pursue the to him, relieved from anxiety of a counter- British, with whom he had come into con-

1 1914 by Lord French (Constable)

engaged O hao haon Buior had other matters to de I for on that dw de I an terac turned on m and inflicted re crisc at Guise which was extremed useful to the Allies at thit moment and loan after ands diew commendation of de L area c from his severe critic (Lord) French

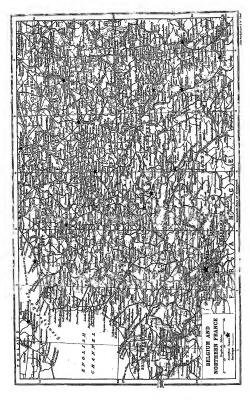
Meanwhile in impo tant development had tal en place; t to he south A new (Sixth) French army s a forming under General Mannours in the neighbourhood of Mont didier and this force which included Sor det s caval v v as designed to meet von Klud s emelonment and cover the threat ened British left 11 was the new mass of manœuvre replacing the Fourth Army then heavily eng gcd in the Ardennes Yet another aimy the \inth under General Foch was being formed behind the French

centre In the meantime the dissipation of the own right armist the armies of the Crown General Toffre never abandoned it and re placed one plan successively by another of the German armies moving through Bel astray for in the wooded and hilly country retreat was south of St Quentin and much the new 45th Division nearer to Paus than the Fourth Army of Germans pause Joffre had been obliged to in contact and was certain of being rein give up the plan and withdraw his whole forces forced faster Joffre was therefore begin

Hags corp and he Br tish c valry were astride the Marne. His right was in touch with Sarrul's left in the Argonne Toffre's Army Order (2,th August) had recognized the new situation and indicated a new plan which was to reconstitute the left flant by strengthening the French Fourth and Fifth Armies and the British aimy with new forces drawn from the armses of the right which had been designed in the first instance as stril mg forces The new role to be played by the right was that of standing on the defensive while the strengthened left pre pared to counter attacl Out of this design was born Maunoury s Sixth Army

Joffre had destined for Maunoury s army a thrust from the Somme Again the Gcr mans were too quicl That eo ossal march of von Kluck's army for which Ger man Head quarters had prepared so long was threatening Paris before Maunours was under way His forces had perforce to retire towards Pans falling back on Creil French plan of a counter offensive on their and parting company with two reserve divisions (under d Amade) which went Princes had been in progress though westward through Amiens General Gal licht from this date onward was given the task of remaling or completing the Sixth Up to the afternoon of 23rd August when Army which he did by reassembling it became evident to him that the German d Amade's two divisions and speeding up plan was maturing faster than his own. Toffre the reconstitution and transport of other had hoped to send the Fourth Army under troops brought from the reservoir of the General Langle de Cary to strike at the flank right wing or from new troops arriving from Algeria By 8th September Maunoury had grum On 23rd August the intention went an army covering Paris from the north east his right north of the Marne at Lagny his at the foot of the Ardennes plateau Langle left at Dammartin His army at first con de Cary could not get at the Germans fast sisted of the 7th Corps two reserve divi enough to interfere with their greater move sions (55th and 56th) some Moroceans ment They held him off and proceeded and marines. It was reinforced (eth Sepwith their envelopment on the west so that tember) by one of d Amade's two divisions by 27th August the Franco British left in by the 4th Corps (5th September) and by

Maunoury s army was thus stronger than Langle de Cary which was to have given the those forces of von Kluck with which he was to a line north of Verdun General Sarrail ning to see his way to the counter strol e he (successor to Ruffey) who commanded the had all along meditated on the left To Third Army faced the German Crown Prince make it more effective he had begun as outside Verdun and Langle de Cary by 4th early as 20th August the formation of a September had slowly withdrawn his army new army the Ninth under General Foch, through Rheims and Chalons to a position which was constituted of forces drawn from





the already depleted right wing, and from against Lorrance had failed. While Joffre the Fourth Army, which had up to that time was withdrawing forces from this wing to been less hard hit than any other army place them on the left and in the centre, He interposed Foch and the Ninth Army the Germans continued to hammer there in in the command of which de Lanrezac had only one more push to convert retreat into been replaced by Franchet d Esperey The disaster, and to reproduce on their right the centre of the French line between Ver- von Kluck had brought about on the left dun and Paris, while the Fifth Army helped If this result could be attained, then the in the counter attack against you Kluck

indicates his behef that you kluck and the and you Bulow in the west and the Crown First German Army had overshot them- Prince Rupprecht and von Heeringen in the selves in their effort to outflank the Allied east neuing as either leg of the pincers left, and would prove vulnerable to a counter- Colour was lent to this German delusion uttack in that region. He assigned tasks by the magnificent fight which Castelnau's (for September 6th) to the different armies army made in front of Nancy Custelnau's as follows Mannoury was to march east- forces had been reduced by the withdrawal wards and drive the Germans over the Oureq, of corps and divisions, but from 3rd Sepwhich here flows downwards to the Marne tember to 6th September he fought in the The British army was to advance north east. Buttle of the Grand Couronne with a fury and attack the Germans about Coulommiers of resistance such as continually persuaded on the Grand Morin-one of the two rivers, the Germans to believe that but one more Grand Morin and Petit Morin, which branch thrust was needed to bring about a French off roughly parallel to one another south of collapse in the east, recovery from which the Marne The French Fifth Army on would be impossible The Battle of the the British right was to push due north Grand Couronne was, in a striking phrase of Farther to the right Foch, with the French Myor General Sir F Maurice, the French Ninth Army, was to hold the centre and Ypres, and Castelnau, after beating off the cover the offensive of the Pifth Army

part of it which consisted of the British army, west was worse beaten than was, in fact, the case The second mistake was the belief that the was placed first, was that attributable in French right was in great strength, and con- equal shares to von Kluck and to German tinued to be so even after its deployment General Head-quarters. Von Kluck had

between the Pourth Army and the Pifth the behef that they were forcing back the Army, which had retreated from Guise, and bulk of the Prench armies, and had to make ider was that Foch's army should hold safe wing a situation comparable to that which German armies would be in the position of Joffre's Army Order of 4th September forcing a double envelopment-you Kluck

culminating attack on 6th September, sus The Battle of the Marne, with its success trined others more spismodic which the in stemming the German invasion, and its Germans began to make in order to prevent failure to accomplish the overthrow which Joffre from moving the large concentrations was hoped for it, was like the successes and which they supposed to be there Long afterfailures before and after, the resultant of the wards Lord French remarked that neither combined interaction of the two strategies, side apprecrited at this moment the real Alhed and German As in a contest between and apparent strength which the machine individuals, each side did is well as the other gun had conferred in the defence, and the would allow it to do, each made mistakes, observation was equally true of the French and each paid the penalty which the adver- 75's, when they had a clear field of action sary was able to enforce The Germans The resistance of Castelnau certainly de made two mistakes. The first, which was ceived the Germans as to his army's strength so evident that it was immediately percept- and by the same token left them blind to able to all the world, was an believing that the swelling forces of the armies gathering the Franco British left, and especially that momentum for the counter attacl in the

The other mistake of the Germans, which

DIECE

with the two divisions of d'Amade, and with 12 miles north-west of Complegne the nucleus of the army which was to be Von Kluck's men had been hardly tried and the British army out of action

forced the British aimy back, and the Ger- would have exposed the German armies to man General Head-quarters, testing secure a more lethal counter-attack than they sus in the belief that it could fight no more, had tained, but we can only consider the camallowed von Kluck to neglect the great paign on the basis of the recorded facts opportunity of never giving it time to rally, What did happen was that on 30th August in order to pursue the favourite German von Kluck, who had on the 27th marched plan of envelopment. The German strategy south-westwards while the Butish were resembled, in short, that of a chess-player retiring south, repeated the manusure by who neglects to take a powerful piece of his changing direction to the south-east, while opponent because he believes he sees an Maunoury's troops, like the British, retired opportunity of mating him. The policy is south. The German design was to fall on sound if the mate is certain, it is unsound the French Fifth Army's flank and roll up if the mate would certainly result, after a the line. This decision was presumably decent interval, from the gain and loss of the arrived at by you Moltke at German General Head-quarters On the evening of 1st Sep-Instead of pursuing the British, you tember you Kluck's main body-oth, ard, Kluck marched south-westwards to envelop 4th, 2nd Corps (left to right in that order) the Allied line. Here he came into contact -lay between Vie-sur-Aisne and a point

Maunoury's Von Kluck drove d'Amade's They had been marched to the limit of their divisions before him through Amiens, and endurance, and the double change of direcforced Maunoury back over the Avre Mau- tion had given them additional mileage to noury, too weak yet to fight, fell back stendily cover On 4th September the main body through Creil towards the northern defences of them had for the most part crossed the of Paris But it is important to observe that Marine and was dispersed along the Petit all the time he was falling back on supports. Morin stream between Montmirail and La coming up He was growing stronger as Perte-sous-Jouarre The German cavalry he retreated, while you Kluck was growing was across the stream, and you Kluck had weaker, from the lengthening of his com- a reserve corps (4th) at his left rear, 8 munications But, ignorant of this, and miles west of the Ourcq The British army wrongly inferring from Maunoury's retrent on 5th September had fallen back to the that Maunoury's army was meffectual as a Forest of Crecy, to bring it in line with the fighting force (and that the British army French Fifth Army On the afternoon of was done for) you Kluck went on his south- 5th September it received the news that it westerly course till 31st August If all had was to go forward agun, an order that sent Imppened as German General Head-quarters a burst of cheering through the ranks, dreamed he should then have been in posi- especially when it was learnt that the advance tion to turn in on the French Fifth Army's was to be made to the north and that we flank, while at the other end of the line the were in fact turning on the Germans By Crown Prince Rupprecht drove home the this time von Kluck was becoming aware hammer blow at Nancy and Verdun This that all was not going according to plan was the will o' the wisp that led the Ger- He had made up his mind that he must do mans astray when, if they had been satisfied something against Maunoury, so he decided with more modest gains, they might have to stop his advance and strengthen his 4th taken the important pieces of Amiens and Reserve Corps in front of the Ourcq Hc (probably) Pans, besides putting Maunoury therefore marched his 2nd Corps back across the Marne, and a little later withdrew another It might not have happened thus There corps which was somewhere between the are theorists who have argued that Paris British and the French Fifth Army for the might have been abandoned, and that the like object of fighting, and, by superior lengthening of the German communications numbers, of defeating the French Sixth Army He counted on being able to hold Allied armies would be cut in two, one half, that you Bulow could give him

retired from the command of the French If this eastern half could be so to speak, Fifth Army, for reasons which he afterwards immobilized, by the Crown Prince and you and had nothing to do with the retirement Heeringen, then you Bulow (German Second from the Mons front in conjunction with the Army) and von Hausen (German Third British, and had been replaced by General Army) could push home their advantage in Pranchet d'Esperey D'Esperey surnalized the centre and ioin von Kluck in rolling up his accession to command by gaining ground from the Germans, instead of losing it, throughout the day. The German cavalry of envelopment by the west, and can only similarly fuled to hold up the British, and have been adopted on the presumption by after resisting them for some time in the the German Great General Staff that a break Forest of Crecy fell back to escape encircle ment by our broadly-fronted advancing back for

pushed too far in one direction for recovery by Castelnau and the Second Army The these requirements was the more important

back the British easily and the French Fifth the western, consisting of the French Fifth, Army without much difficulty, with the aid the British, and the French Srith, would be driven in on Puris, the other half, the Again his plan failed De Lanrezae had eastern, could be pressed back on Verdun the western group This was probably not the original German plan, which was one through at the centre was likely

This more ambitious movement declared line The British centre reached the Grand itself on 4th September by a furious attack Morin that evening This was probably the on Foch's army and on the battle ground of first intumation that you Kluck received the Grand Couronne, in front of Nancy It that he had been mistaken in believing that did not begin badly. The German Crown the British army could be neglected as a Prince's attack on General Sarrail (Third reacting force Beyond the British and the French Army) drove back Sarrail's right French Lifth Army the Germans by heavy across the Heights of the Meuse, between attacks pressed back both Foch and Langle Toul and Verdun, and so created that salient de Cary, but did not succeed in pressing them of St Mihiel, east of Verdun, which remuned till, in 1918, the American First This was the ventable opening of the Army was sent forward by General Foch Battle of the Murne, the realization of the to flatten it out. But as a whole the battle Germans that the victory which had seemed of the Grand Couronne was a German assured was on the point of slipping from reverse, and the first indication in the long their grasp, the hope and expectation on the campaign of the power of dogged resistance part of the French Head-quarters Staff that which the French could display But, the German success might be converted into though this part of the plan failed, there a reverse The German plan was not in- still remained to the Germans on the 5th elastic, though, as events showed, it had been and 6th September the chance of overwhelming Foch by the combined efforts of von It had become clear that von Kluck's forced Bulow's (Second) and von Hausen's (Third) marches admirable as they were as an Armies If Foch could be driven back, achievement, had failed of their consumma- while the British army and the French Lifth tion in cutting off the French Lifth Army, Army were allowed to come forward, then, and that the British army, far from being always supposing von Kluck could envelop destroyed, was a protection to the Tifth and drive back Maunoury, the result would Army's flank Yet the plan might be modi- be to catch General French and General fied by breaking through the French centre, Franchet d'Esperey as in a pincers, between where Franchet d'Esperey and Foch guarded von Kluck and von Bulow The two it somewhere in the neighbourhood of essentials of this plan were, first, that Foch Epernay and striking a similar hammer-blow should be driven in, and, second, that the well to the east in the neighbourhood of British should be held while von Kluck was Nancy, where the way to Verdun was held dealing with Maunoury, and the second of

corps (and and 4th) northwards on 6th Sep tember to utack Viaunours and by doing klucl a decision was made in haste for on the morning of the (th the British 1st Army Corps saw a column of German infantry which yas moving towards them, without firing a shot-a phenomenon that led to the not unnatural conviction that the First German Army was in full retreat It was not at that moment a change in its had made a mistale There was nothing to hold the British army buck but three enemy to hold the river Von Marwitz had, Kluck became aware of this and it was very necessary to him that the British should be with Maunoury

The battle of the 6th and 7th September to strike down Mannoury with his right arm. while he forced off the British (and the was in progress French Fifth Army) with a we'd ened left At the same time Foch fighting desper south of La Fere Champenoise

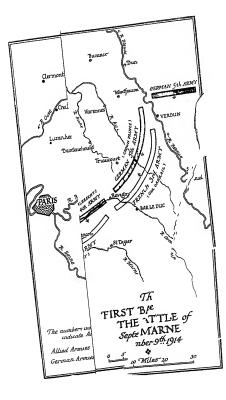
8th September was the day of decision Allenby's cavalry and Haig's infantry The arriving from Belgium to complete the knock-German cavalry, fearing to be cut off, retired.

To fulfil it von kluck sent two army lewing their infantry to take care of themselves Most of these were captured or killed, and at the end of the day (8th) the so tool pressure off the British front Von British were well across the Petit Morin as were the advanced forces of the French Fifth Army at Montmirail Von Kluck must by this time have become perturbed. his right arm was not pushing forward fist face to the right about and go northwards enough, his left arm was being pushed back too fist He gave orders to blow up the bridges on the Marne, but his cavalry only destroyed those at La Ferte sous Jouarre

It was a most damaging oversight Next dispositions only was in progress. But it morning (9th) the British found the bridges west of Chateau Thierry unbroken, and no cavalry divisions under you Marwitz and in a phrase, let his commander down, though these were not the men to do it. Von the fault was not his, but in the imposition on him of a bigger task than his tired horses could compass The German guns did not held back so as to give some time for dealing open on the British till the 2nd Corps was well over the Marne, and its leading division (3rd) was 4 miles beyond the river, and then became an effort on von Kluck's part actually north of the point where, 12 miles to the west, von Kluck's fight with Maunoury

It has been pointed out, and even imputed as a blame to General French, that he did ately east of these operations in the centre not make better use of an opportunity to of the line was very slowly-too slowly for press right on here with the whole force But, the German purpose-being pushed back as a fact, the British 1st Corps and the and Corps right were held up at Chateau-Thierry, which the Germans still held, and Maunoury was very hard pressed some of the 3rd Corps, at the other extremity of the his troops had been fighting hard since the line, could not get across at La Ferte sousbattle began three days before and you Jouarre, because the bridges had gone and Kluck was working with more and more the Germans had not. The delay permitted troops round the French left But all the the Germans to string out another defensive while reinforcements were flowing up to cavalry line, and von Kluck spared some Maunoury some of them had been rushed infantry and artillery to strengthen it. The out of Paris by General Galliem in motor British had some brisk fighting with this buses and taxis and Maunoury held his own improvised line, and captured a battery of well While he could do so the steady howitzers 1 That was a very inspiriting ciradvance of the British and the French Fifth cumstance for the British, and on the Mau-Armies was a constant source of embarrass noury front the tide was on the verge of ment to von Kluck On the 8th the British turning in favour of the French Von Kluck went on to the Petit Moiin, and the Geiman was making a last endeavour with tired troops cavalry, though stiffened by some good and not enough ammunition. The German regiments of German infantry hastily brought shells were running low. So also was the up in lorries could not hold the attack of food. To set against this he had more troops

This a gual honour fell to the 1st Batt Lancolnah re Regt





position of boxers who have fought them- broken under attack, was strengthening selves to a standstill, and face one another. On the morning of 9th September, the Ger blow

and fighting

Von Kluck's share in the German plan the Prussian Guard, and then came the gap had failed Its failure dragged with it the On the other side of the gap you Bulow's centre The German centre, which had retreat

out blow-if he could but administer it been the attacker, was weakening, the Both von Kluck and Maunoury were in the French centre, which had bent but had never hardly able to raise a fist for one more mans made one last attempt to carry their central plan through by attacking Foch and The question was which would collapse Langle de Cary on Foch's right In order first? While you Kluck debated it, his to do so you Bulow had to take a risk. He aviators told him that the roads from Paris thought, as von Kluck had thought about were crowded with yet more motor-lornes Maunoury, that one more push might overand taxes bringing up General Gallieni's last throw Foch Therefore, in order to get sou-every soldier that could be collected the necessary troops for it, he left a gap in The news was too much for von Kluck, his own centre between La Fere Champecoupled as it was with the knowledge that noise and the marshes of St Gond Thus the British were threatening to get behind on the morning of the 9th von Bulow's him It was he who cracked At eleven right was giving way a little before Franchet o'clock in the morning he gave the order to d Esperey's 10th Corps (of the Fifth Army), retire His troops went back in good order Foch's left wing, next to this, was holding its own in the marshes of St Gond against

other ramifications of the scheme. The left and von Hausen's right were making French Fifth Army had steadily pushed in their last and supreme effort to roll back front of them the insufficient forces of the Foch. The issue hung in the balance. But corps which von Kluck had left to delay Foch had his 42nd Iron Division in hand them and at the same time had pressed back. The critical moment also was at hand. It the right of von Bulow's army, the bulk of came between 5 and 6 o'clock in the after which had been fiercely assailing Foch and noon Foch used both the men and the the French centre This success of Franchet hour He flung his Iron Division into the d'Esperey allowed him to send his own gap against the exposed flank of von Bulow's right corps farther eastwards to Foch's left wing, and smashed it. At the same assistance, and this help enabled Foch, in time his hard-pressed centre and right came his turn, to withdraw one of his own best forward again like a released spring Under divisions—the famous 42nd—and keep it in this double attack the German centre broke. hand for use at a critical moment. Thus a turned, and fied back northwards, pursued double movement was in progress, and was by Foch's infantry and accompanied far leading to a German defeat, on the one hand into the night by a storm of rain. The the Germans were being compelled to with- Battle of the Marne was won at a stroke, draw troops from their own centre to the and the whole of the German line from west, and the French were enabled to with Verdun to Meaux and to Nanteuil had to draw troops from the west to their own conform to you Bulows and you Kluck's

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLES ON THE AISNE LINE (September-October, 1914)

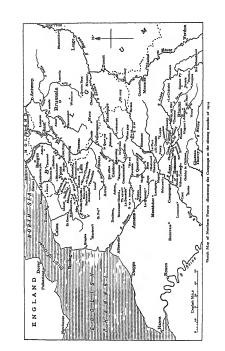
in 1919) ' we fully believed we were driving Cormicy-Rheims-Verzy the Germans back to the Meuse, if not to the Rhine, and all my correspondence and communications at this time with Joffre, and the French generals most closely associated with me, breathed the same spirit" Joffie's Army Order of 10th September says categorically

The German forces are giving way on the Marie and in Champagne befo e the Allied armies of the centre and left wing. To confirm and exploit this auccess at is necessary to follow up this movement with energy so as to allow the enemy no rest. The offensive movement will therefore be continued along the whole front in a general N N C direction.

When in so short a space of time the committed Nor, though signs of any Ger-German march on Puris was reversed, the man rout were absent, were these days strategists among the Allies, not yet accus- without material encouragement in captures tomed to the swayings hither and thither of men and guns The French Third Army which were to take place, and which, as now captured all the artillery of a German corps, may be seen are inevitable when nations, and there was no pause in the German renot armies, are thrown into the struggle, treat before the French Sixth Army, the believed that the German effort in spending British army, the French Fifth Army, south itself had involved the German armies in of the Aisne. At the same time the Trench urretnevable disaster It was not so, there Ninth and Fourth Armies both made conis, as President Lincoln once said, "a lot siderable progress. By nightfall of 12th of rum in a nation", and the nation of September the French Sixth Army had Germany had yet to put forth its reserves reached the Aisne after some opposition, of strength Moreover, as General French, and the French cavalry on the extreme left long afterwards admitted, the possibilities were working round Complegne to threaten of defensive warfare were great, far greater the German communications. The British than either side had yet realized, and were army was also (by next morning) in position increasing But, as General Joffre's Army south of the Aisne, between Soissons on the Orders at that time show, and as Lord west and Bourg on the east The French French has declared (in " 1914", published Fifth Army on its right was on the line

It was on the Assne that the Germans elected to stand, it was here also that they brought into action one of the surprises (though it need not have been) of the campaign, namely, the employment of heavy guns for field purposes "The first surprise", to quote Lord French, " came when the 'Jack Johnsons' began to fail" The " Jack Johnson", or "Black Maria", was a nickname given to the high-explosive shells fired from 8-inch howitzers brought down from the fortress of Maubeuge, to support the German defensive position on the Aisne The position was well-suited to defence

For a few days the news from other theatres The Aisne valley runs east and west, and of war flattered these expectations 'The consists of a flat-bottomed depression, of Belgian army had retired behind the en- width varying from half a mile to two miles, trenched lines of Antwerp, at that time down which the river flows a winding course, regarded as a model fortress, and had made sometimes nearer the southern heights, a successful sortie, which certainly had the sometimes the northern. The high ground effect of impeding the dispatch of German is about 400 feet above the floor of the valley, reinforcements to France The news from and is broken with numerous spurs. The Russia raised expectations that there, too, Chivres spur, on the northern bank, is the the Germans would find themselves deeply most prominent, on the southern bank, the



artillery fire from the northern heights which the Germans held

In the early hours of 13th September the British attacked the river line along the whole of their front, and by nightfall all the passages. except that at Conde, were held During the night bridges were thrown over by the engineers and the British forces got across. and made good progress on the 14th The best progress was made on the right, the centre and left of the army were not so successful The 3rd Division for example, after crossing at Vailly had nearly reached Aizy. 25 miles north of the river, when they were driven back by a powerful counter attack supported by a strong force of heavy artillery The 4th Division could not advance beyond the northern edge of the Chares plateau Before both divisions was a heavy concentration of artillers. The position was in brief. that the British army had got across the river and had shot forward by its own momentum, but was beginning to find opposi tion that was strengthening hour by hour The French Sixth Army was advancing with a wheeling motion but its right was holding, rather than pushing the Germans back The French Fifth Army was heavily engaged a German break. Their line recrossed the

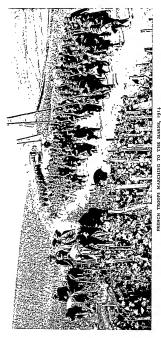
less message The 1st Corps had been heavily attacked of the Meuse throughout the day It beat the attacks off

Sermoise spur, stands near the Vesle The place, and the British Commander, feeling river is sluggish, but unfordable, and is more and more sure that his own army would spanned by many road bridges-all of them not get through, began to turn his eyes, as under observation and direct or plunging others did, to General Maunoury on the west What actually happened is precisely and illuminatingly told in Lord French's own narrative of " 1914"

> On the 16th I went to see General Maunoury at his head quarters I found him watching an attack of the 61st and 62nd Divisions (French) on From all I could see the French appeared to getting on very well On my way back I visited the Corps Commanders and they all expresed the utmost confidence in their ability to hold their positions. After my return to Head quarters the lisson officer with the Suth Army reported to me. His accounts were disappointing after my experience with Maunoury. He said that the 11th French Corps had been checked south essed the utmost confidence in their ability to west of Noyon by a night attack of troops from west of rvoyon by a night arrack of troops from the 9th German Reiserve Corps which was said to have reached Noyon from Belgium another incident in that continual flanking' and outflanking mancut re which was to cease only at the sea

Lord French was right in the conclusion which he then formed This was that, despite phantom retirements and expected retreats by the Germans, there would be no further success to be attained by a frontal attack at any part of their line, and that any attempt to turn their flank would be countered at once, and might be dangerous to the aggressor Nowhere was there any sign of all day from the British flank as far as Rheims Aisne at Berry au Bac, where it was now Lord French, as he has since affirmed, opposite General Foch, who had followed became convinced on this day that the Ger- the German up through Rheims and across mans had come to a stand, the next day the Suppe, only to be counter attacked there-(17th) his opinion strengthened and it was after, and to be unable to retain those heights confirmed by an intercepted German wire- at Nogent l'Abbesse, whence the Germans Reinforcements (6th Dni- shelled Rheims for four ensuing years sion) were coming up to him, but he was not From Rheims the Allied line, already besatisfied with his position for various reasons, ginning to fall into entrenchments, stretched his losses were accumulating, the enemy's eastwards through the Argonne and formed artiller, was marl edly stronger, the British a salient round Verdun, the hinge of the were short of machine guns and the artillery Trench defence. It then turned southlost at Le Cateau The day had not been wards through the plain of the Woevre, without its promises and disappointments where the Bavarians were facing the heights

On the 17th the British 1st Corps was at a good deal of cost to itself and towards heavily but unsuccessfully attacked, the evening a temporary retirement of German French 18th Corps lost Craonne, though infantry and cavalry renewed the hopes of a they still clung to a great part of the Chemin continued German retreat It did not take des Dames, a reserve French division cap-



From a photograph taken in a wneyard in Northern France within sound of the guas of the contending armics



in Berry au Bae, and a French envalry corps teeted-the British army preferably being made a valuable raid on the German com- deputed for the task. Nevertheless, at this munications as far as Ham and St Quentin period there were fliekers of expectation that These operations, with their attendant even yet the Germans might be uprooted successes and disappointments were typical General Maunoury (22nd September) wrote of the situation General Joffre at this to General French saying that the Germans suncture endeavoured to put into operation were certainly falling back from his front, on a more substantial basis the manusivre and that he intended to advance and attack of outflanking the German line. The on the 23rd. The Difth French Army, on French Sixth Army was ordered to assume the British right, was also planning an attack. a defensive line from Soissons to Bailly and the British linked up the efforts of both pending the formation of another army under But little progress was made, and the focus de Castelnau, brought over from Nancy of action moved farther east, to de Castelnau This army of four corps (4th, 14th, 17th, and and the Second French Army De Castel-20th) was to concentrate at once to the north nau made fair progress during the last week west of Novon It was intended to operate of September on the line from Ribecourt to in an easterly direction. These operations, Bray sur Somme, but at the beginning of though they were not successful in turning. October he was being counter attracked and the enemy s flank, were effective in changing was practically at a standstill the line of battle from "east and west" to

have never been aurpassed

that it behoved the Alkes to guard the Armies had been fighting hard, and the

tured two battalions of the Prussian Guard Channel ports while they could still be pro-

At this date the British Commander-in-

north and south", and built the first see Chief had made up his mind as to the action tion of that great besieging wall, which was most appropriate to the capability and temper destined to prove an impenetrable barrier of the British Expeditionary Force, and sugbetween the Germans and their main objec gested (20th September) that it should be tive-of which Paris and Amiens were the moved to the west of General Maunoury first and Calais and the Channel ports the and the Sryth French Army Here, reinsecond The credit for this muncuive be- forced by the 7th Dri ision, and within a few longs to General Toffre. His staunch ad- weeks by other divisions, bringing it up to mirer Lord French, remarks that Joffre, in a total of 10 divisions (5 corps) and 4 cavalry directing it as he did, must be credited with divisiona, its power of initiative would be one of these flashes of military genius which greater, and it would be nearer its lines of communication with the British Iales We Meanwhile the British troops on the north shall not, perhaps, be doing Lord French side of the Aisne in proximity to the Chemin an injustice in supposing that he felt he would des Dames, were being very hard pressed be in a more independent position if he were The brunt of the German attacks fell on Sir in Inison with one section only of the French Douglas Hag and the 1st Army Corps line instead of two In his note to General Sir Douglas Haig's troops held on pertina- Joffre suggesting the re arrangement the cost the Germans some 7000 men in killed built up trench lines on both sides of the alone, but the British losses were not light. Aisne, and that the removal of his army, and and the heavy artillery was making the posi- the substitution of a French one in its place, tion very difficult. It is not a little interest. would not be difficult or dangerous. General ing that, according to Lord French's own Joffre in his reply agreed that " for nearly admission, in the opinion of one very good fifteen days the armies of the centre have judge, namely himself, the probabilities of been accrockéer to the ground without making making any impression on the German de any real advance"-an important indication fensive positions were already beginning to of the German intentions, as afterwards seem shadowy, and he had a feeling, which could be plainly seen. General Joffre added shortly afterwards expressed stself in action, that on his right the Third and First French the hope of enveloping the Allied wings.

Dunkirk, Calais, and Boulogne; and it re- and Corps' left front. mained his considered opinion that the Foch and French then agreed on a comsented to them.

proceeding. During these days the Ger- they reached the line Sailly-Nieppe. Between

Second French Army, on the extreme left, mans were pressing de Castelnau hard. By was being furiously attacked. The infer- the 9th the British movement was in full ence was that the Germans still entertained swing, the 2nd Corps, preceded by cavalry, being timed to reach the line Aire-Bethune on In principle, General Joffre assented to the 11th, the 3rd Corps to detrain at St. General French's propositions, postponing, Omer on the 12th. The cavalry was under however, the date of the re-arrangement and General Allenby, timed to reach Aire by suggesting his own methods of effecting it, the 10th. News had been received from The westward movement of the British forces Rawlinson, in command of the 7th Division was fixed to begin on 3rd October. Before sent to aid the Belgians. Antwerp had the march could begin, the situation, and the fallen on the 9th, and the withdrawal of necessity, which was in General French's the British troops from Belgium, no less mind, of covering the Channel ports had than the withdrawal of the Naval Brigade become more acute. Antwerp was in danger from Antwerp, was accompanied by great of falling, and the Belgian War Council had difficulties. General French directed Rawdecided that the Belgian Field Army, under linson (ath Corps) to hold the Lvs if he the command of King Albert, would with- could and await connection. De Maud'huy draw from Antwerp in the direction of with the French army under him was mean-Ghent to protect the coast line, and to aim while having to fight hard to keep his posiat co-operating with the Allied armies, tion, but he promised to hold a line to General French believed that with Antwerp Bethune till Smith-Dorrien and the 2nd as a base there would be no unsuperable Corps could get up. Instructions were obstacle to an immediate German advance on sent to Allenby and his cavalry to act on the

Germans could have overwhelmed the Bel- bined advance east, which was by the 13th gian army and captured the coast line had to make the line Lille-Courtrai, Foch's left they at once seized the opportunity pre- securing the passage of the Deûle at Lille. the British centre to be directed towards On the same day (3rd October) General Courtrai, holding the Lys there. The 4th French received two other pieces of im- Corps and the Belgians were to be on the portant information, the first that the Indian left of the advance. By the 11th (morning) contingent was arriving at Orleans, the Allenby's cavalry had cleared the Germans second that the 21st French Corps had begun out of the forest of Nieppe, south of Hazeto detrain west of Lille. This corps formed brouck; the 2nd Corps had reached the line the left of the French army, under de Mau- by the canal, and were directed to move east d'huy, which was concentrating to the north so as to join up with the immediate left of of de Castelnau to carry out the attempted the Tenth French Army. The 3rd Corps movement to outflank the Germans by the had one division moving on Hazebrouck. north. The armies under de Castelnau and Allenby's cavalry continued to do good work de Maud'huy formed a group directed by on the 11th and 12th and following days, General Foch. General French's northward making a great sweep to the north and northchassé croisés now began. The 2nd Corps east, and driving the Germans in front of was the first to begin to move, accom- them. Gough's cavalry division captured panied by the 1st Cavalry Division. By the the Mont des Cats in front of (north) Haze-8th of October the 2nd Corps had nearly brouck, and de Lisle's division halted in completed their detrainment at Abbeville, front of Merris. By the 14th the cavalry to which General French's Head-quarters had reached the area, Kemmel, Wytschaete, were removed. The 3rd Corps had been Messines. The 3rd Corps (Pulteney) was relieved on the Aisne by French troops, moving up behind them, and on the 13th and their entrainment at Compiègne was captured Bailleul and Meteren; by the 15th

I pres with the ard Cavalry Drusson (Bung) which lasted till the 12th, and compelled the well in front of them The three cavalry Germans to bring up reinforcements Other divisions had secured Mont Kemmel, and minor sorties were made, but the Germans, this was a position of immense importance in possession of an excellent network of in the subsequent operations about Ypres railways, had little difficulty in reinforcing On the 15th, too, the retreating Belgian army, themselves, and towards the 25th of Sepwhich had assembled in the area Ostend, tember their preparations for the siege of Dixmude, Furnes, Nieuport, withdrew be- Antwerp were nearing completion. Conhind the line of the Yser to the north of sequently, when on that day the Belgians, in I pres, and with Rawlinson's 4th Corps now response to a request from General Joffre. in touch, and the French Naval Division, prepared to attack the German communicawhich also had assisted the Belgian retreat, tions-about which the Germans were, and at D.xmude and Nieuport, the line to the had been, extremely nervous-the operation coast was complete. The 2nd Corps had reduced itself to a threatening movement in some hard fighting to establish its position on the direction of Termonde The siege of the Ine Annequin, Festubert, Vieille-Cha- Antwerp began on 28th September and by pelle Fosse and, with the arrival of the rst 6th October having forced the line of the Corps at St Omer from the Assne, General Nethe and crossed the Dendre, which falls French's removal of the British Expedition- into the Scheldt at Termonde, the situation ary Force to the positions about Ypres, of the Belgian army had become very prewhich they were to occupy so long and carious at such a cost, was complete

the 11th and 15th the 4th Corps, under Raw- Scheldt, crossed the river and threatened linson, was constantly engaged as he fell back the westward line of retreat of the Belgians towards General French in assisting and This movement was checked and the Gercovering the retreat of the Belgian army-the mans recrossed the river. On the 9th of 7th Division (Capper) retiring successively. September, when the Battle of the Marne through Ghent, Aeltre, Roulers, to Ypres was in effect decided, the Belgian High On the 15th this division was east of Command ordered another series of sorties

The threat was two fold Up to the It is necessary in order to complete this beginning of October the chief danger was review of the position to recapitulate the that of being surrounded by the German course of events as they affected the armies army besieging Antwerp. But by the 13th in Belgium Bi, and after, 20th August the of September the German retreat from the main Belgian army had been disposed on Marne had brought the German mass on the Rivers Rupel and Nethe, which formed to the Assne From that moment the outan outermost defensive line about Antwerp flanking manguvres of the Germans and Its function there had been to attract to itself the Allies had resulted in the prolongation and detain the greatest possible number of of the German line (by 1st October) from German forces Up to the 25th of Septem- Lassigny to Lille, only 38 miles from the ber the German forces opposed to the Bel- sea If it had been prolonged much farther gians were not superior in number to them, it would have cut off the Belgian army from but after that date the position changed any nunction with the Franco-British forces After 21st August the bulk of the German Ghent must therefore be held to protect a troops had turned south towards the Sambre Belman retreat, and its occupation was urged (v bere the battle of the Sambre and the on the French and British cabinets on 4th engagement at Mons took place) and only October Two days later the Belgian High the 3rd and oth Reserve Corps had been left Command judged that a retreat from Antm front of Antwerp The Belgian army werp was urgent, and by the 7th October made sorties and sustained counter-attacks the Belgian army was moving westward On the 4th September (almost the eve of the There was ample reason The Scheldt had Battle of the Marne) the Germans marched been forced by the Germans south of Teron Termonde, south-west of Antwerp on the monde, and advanced German forces were arrived at Ghent and held its approaches The Germans threatened on their left flank became thus unable to press forward to squeeze the Belgians towards the Dutch frontier and had to permit their continued retreat westwards There were two defenrest the Ghent Terneuzen canal prolonged by the Scheldt and the Schipdonck canal prolonged by the Lys But by now fully led, by 15th October It had been interned in Holland

approaching on unoccupied Ghent from reduced to \$2 000 men (48,000 rifles) The the south On 8th October the Germans Trench front was prepared for defence in began to get in touch with the retreating this area as far as La Bassee The French Belgians at Lokeren between the Scheldt and British troops together here were shortly and the Dutch frontier. The Germans to be attacked by the German siege army were bringing up yet more dryssions on the and the four fresh corps whose appearance following day when the British 7th Division, was such an unpleasant surprise to General and a small French force opportunely French The line between La Basse and the sea was thinly held, and the arrival of the British and and 3rd Army Corps left it still with a heavy task after 17th October when the British and French troops began to take up positions from Y pres to the sea

The British attempts to help the Belgian sive lines on which the retreating army could army in its stand had not been in all re spects fortunate The least gratifying episode was that connected with the dispatch of a brigade of Royal Marines and part of the the German Antwerp siege army was coming recently formed Naval Division (under up together with four new army corps General Paris) to Antworp They were sent freshly arrived in Belgium, the 22nd, 23rd, at once into the trenches and three battahons 26th and 27th Reserve Corps The Belgian of the Naval Division staved there till the Army Command feeling that even with surrender of Antwerp on 9th October About French and British co operation it could not 800 of the Naval Division were made hold the more advanced line, continued its preoners and another 1500 were pushed in retreat to the Yser It arrived there, skil the retreat across the Dutch frontier and

CHAPTER III

THE DEFENCE OF THE CHANNEL PORTS (October-December 1914)

Assne to the neglect of guarding the flank of there to be thrown away for General French the Allied line where it stretched westwards and General Foch were alike in believing to the sea the Germans lost an opportunity, during the first fortnight of October, 1914 such as was never again vouchsafed to them, that the German bolt had been shot and to outflank the Allies by reinforcing their that the initiative in a proffered turning right in the same direction before de Castel movement north of Ypres rested with the nau s movement could develop They chose British and French forces as an alternative to attack the British and

If the British had delayed too long on the Allies were hardly persuaded that it was

Even when it was reported between the French forces to the east (instead of to the roth and 15th October that the Germans west) of Ypres with the double object of were directing a powerful offensive move cutting the Allied line and of driving the ment between Ypres and the Yser, General British and French forces towards the sea French retained sufficient confidence to base -instead of cutting them off from it. It his plan on a British attack. Smith Dorrien is an interesting circumstance that, if the and the 2nd Corps were directed to continue Germans threw away their opportunity, the the movement to the east, Pulteney and the and Corps were to make good the river the German plans. To some extent this between his forces and the British.

have been an irreparable disaster, and thus they were disposed as follows:uncomparably greater than a possible break through by the Germans farther north. The British Commander-in-Chief therefore decided to throw the balance of his effort in s counter-attack on the Ypres-Yser front, and in doing so took a decision which is one of the landmarks of the war, and which in the that he determined to avert at all costs.

You. VI.

Lys between Armentieres and Sailly-sur- courageous strategy may have been effective Les: Allenby was to take his cavalry towards in confusing the Germans' intentions, but Menin; Rawlinson was to move towards they continued their activity in the north, Courtrai. On the 16th October these move- heavily attacking the Belgians at Nieuport, ments were in progress, but the progress and also advancing through Roulers to force was not considerable. Its want of rapidity back the British cavalry on Messines. By impressed General French; and he appealed the 21st General French's apprehensions to General Foch for assistance, if assistance of their increasing strength were confirmed. could be given. But Armentieres and the The comparatively small German force of Bois Grenier were captured by the 18th, one corps had grown in three days to four-General French's doubts were increasing, the 21st, 22nd, 26th, and 27th Reserve Corps The French troops on the Yser were not -not the best German troops, but formidstrong, the Belgians were tired out, the able in numbers. Their sudden appearance british cavalry in that neighbourhood were was a thunderbolt; and the only reason the also very weary; farther south the enemy British Commander had for reassurance was was hourly growing stronger in front of the that his direction of the 1st Corps towards and and ard Corps, whose endurance had the neighbourhood of this German concentrabeen heavily taxed. The British line was tion had been sound. There remained no extended over too wide a front; it had no question, of course, of any British offensive; reserves. General French's apprehensions a stern defence till relief could come was the were shared by de Maud'huy, who also saw only prospect visible. Some idea of the the danger that a wedge might be driven task laid on the British troops may be gained from a statement of their dispositions on Such a wedge, south of Menin, would 21st October. Beginning from the right

> and Corps-6 miles. French cavalry-1 mile. ard Corps-12 miles. Cavalry corps-4 miles. 4th Corps-6 miles. ist Corps-7 miles.

opinion of history will surely entitle the Beyond these, on a front of 20 miles, were British Commander to be called a great French Territorials, a French cavalry corps soldier. He had two risks to face, and he (de Mitry), Belgians, and French Marines. took the greater. If he had lost the Channel The British 1st Corps (Haig) which joined Ports the disaster would have been immense, up with these occupied its line Zonnebekebut not irreparable; if he had heen separated Langemarck-Bixschoote on the 21st after from the French by a German wedge, there hard fighting. Against the thinly held would have been an end to the British Ex- front the Germans had the 7th Corps, the peditionary Force. It was this second peril 19th Corps, the 18th Corps, a division of the 13th Corps, the 27th Corps, the 26th, Sir Douglas Haig, with the 1st Corps, 23rd, and 22nd Corps, the 3rd Reserve Corps was instructed to advance towards Thorout, and an Ersatz division-practically 9 corps. making every effort to turn the German left The positions occupied by the British were flank, then guarded, it was supposed, by the not taken up without difficulty, and there 3rd German Reserve Corps only. With was some confusion caused, in front of the assistance of the French and Belgians Haig and the 1st Corps, by the unexpected on the north, and Rawlinson's 4th Corps withdrawal of the French cavalry to the on the south, it was hoped that Haig might west bank of the Ypres canal. This conbe able to thrust back this corps and so upset fusion had, however, one good result in faded, the battle-line which was to be held wounded lying on the battle-field. so long in the northern section by the Allies was defined and established.

of the Allies.

determining the evacuation of Ypres by the infantry brigades and one cavalry division. French troops therein, and the proper cover- The German attack began here on 18th ing of the British left flank. The opening October on the front Nicuport-Dixmude. phases of the Battle of Ypres may be said On the 19th the German attacks were to have lasted from the 21st to the 26th launched against the left and centre from October, and in these five days the northern Lombaertzyde to Beerst. Attacks continued portion of the British line advanced a little on the 20th, and on the 21st the concentration in spite of the weight against them, and of the German forces brought a total of 7. inflicted heavy losses on the Germans. To divisions against the Belgian army. Most the south, between Zonnebeke and La Bassée, of the Belgian reserves had been thrown in, a certain amount of ground was lost; but in order to maintain their positions. By the troops held staunchly to their positions. nightfall the Germans were across the Lys At midnight on the 22nd both Pulteney and and had established bridge-heads. The Smith-Dorrien were anxious about their Belgians, though holding on with great positions. On the evening of the 23rd the determination, were pressed farther and 1st Corps withstood the culmination of some farther back, and sent urgently for French very fierce attacks. They estimated that help. The French 42nd Division enabled in the three days, inclusive, by this attack a rally to be made, but the assaults on the the Germans had lost 8000 men without almost exhausted Belgian line went on uningaining ground. Summing up the first terruptedly till the 25th, when there was phase of the battle it might be said that, while a lull. By that date 10,000 Belgians had all hope of driving in the German flank had been wounded, in addition to the dead and

By this time the optimism of the French commanders had been tempered by facts In this narrative of the Battle of Ypres as they presented themselves, and General should be interpolated the enforced retire- Joffre had sent the French oth Corps to ment of the French from Lille and the part assist the British in holding the Ypres played by the Belgians. De Maud'huy (Tenth salient. The second phase of this battle French Army) had made an attempt to save began on 27th October and lasted five days, it, while it was still held by French Terri- a period which Lord French has described torials, by advancing through the mining as more momentous and fateful than any district north-east of Arras, but he found others during which he commanded in the Germans in force at Douai and had to France. "31st October and 1st November fall back. Lille, subjected to a heavy and will remain for ever memorable in the hisunnecessary bombardment, surrendered on tory of our country, for, during these two 13th October. It was an important railway days, no more than one thin and straggling junction, and its loss was evidence of the line of tired-out British soldiers stood German recovery. From Lille and Douai between the Empire and its practical ruin they advanced on Arras, which the French as a first-class independent Power." On had temporarily to evacuate. A battalion the 27th Haig sent a message to French about of the Prussian Guard entered the town but the exhausted condition of the 7th Division were driven out, and though other German (Capper). It was attached temporarily to attacks were made till the end of October Haig's 1st Corps and took over the ground the town remained finally in the possession south of the Ypres-Menin road, Meanwhile the Germans were pouring in troops The Belgians had to bear a very determined till, by the end of October, they had 12 thrust by the Germans at the very outset of corps opposed to the wearied 7 corps of the First Battle of Ypres. They were hold- the Allies, and enjoyed, moreover, an enoring a region intersected by ditches, canals, mous artillery superiority both in numbers and streams, and on a front of 22 miles the and weight of guns. The 28th saw the loss only reserves they could command were the of Neuve Chapelle by Smith-Dorrien's 2nd Cores, which was being severely tried; and ing off a severe German counter-attack.

French Corps took it on. General Foch, trophic: it may be noted, was on this day still sanpossible, but, according to General French, no longer agreed with some of his colleagues in opposing the inundation of the low-lying lands about the Yser to the sea: he was,

on the contrary, in favour of the inundation. At dawn on 30th October the 19th Brigade carried out a brilliant counter-attack which threw back the Germans on the right of the 3rd Corps. But an hour later Haig was heavily shelled all along his front, and on the cavalry divisions holding the ground support of Haig and the 1st Corps.

It was necessary, for at dawn on 31st on that day de Maud'huy, on the British October a heavy infantry attack on the left right, sent in a message to say he was very of the 4th Division in the valley of the Douve anxious about his left flank. The set-off was the prelude to concentrated German to these anxieties was a success of the 6th assaults between Gheluvelt and Messines. Division, just south of Armentières, in beat- Quite early Messines was lost again, and the attack was the first pressed against the right On 29th August, the first critical day, the of the 1st Cavalry Division, and subsequently centre of the Ypres solient, held by the 1st against the 2nd Cavalry Division. The and 7th Divisions, was attacked in the neigh- French supports were sent forward in a bourhood of Gheluvelt by large masses of counter-attack a little before midday; but the enemy, who drove the British back on the battle, fiercest about and in Messines, the village. By nightfall a counter-attack went on all day and hardly ceased to hang had recovered the ground, and the position in the balance of victory or defeat till nightthen ran roughly as follows: - The two fall. The situation in front of the 1st Corps assailed British divisions held a line from at Gheluvelt was equally menacing and a point north of the Ypres-Menin road, where critical. A little after midday the German the 7th joined up with the cavalry under attack against Gheluvelt reached its highest Allenby on the Wytschaete-Messines ridge, development, and the line of the 1st Division The other in the northerly direction, extended was broken there. They were reported to to the west of Reutel and Poezelhoek, and the Commander-in-Chief to be falling back ues continued to the east of Zonnebeke along the main road, and to General French station by the 2nd Corps, where the 9th the news seemed at that moment eatas-

it may be noted, was on this day still san- "To me, indeed." he afterwords wrote, "it guine that an Allied advance would yet be seemed as though our line at last was broken. If seemed as though our line at last was broken. If this were the case the immense numerical superi-ority of the enemy would render retreat a very difficult operation, particularly in view of the fact that Ypres and the Yee by In our immediate rear. Our only hope more secreted to be to make a seand on the line X pres-Messines: but it was a great of a close and determined pursuit. The last barrier between the Germans and the Channel scaboard secence to have broken down." scaboard seemed to have broken down.

Happily these forebodings were relieved by an unexpected and, as it seemed at the moment, a miraculous recovery on the part in and around Hollebeke the enemy fell of the 1st Division, which rallied on the line with the fiercest fury of all. By the evening of the woods east of the bend of the Menin the 2nd and 3rd Cavalry Divisions had been road. The Germans had been cheeked by compelled to fall back to the canal, leaving an enfillade fire from the north; a counterthe enemy in possession of Hollebeke, and attack had been delivered by the 1st (Guards) the 1st Cavalry Division, heavily pressed at Brigade, and the right of the 2nd Division Messines, had lost the village and won it and the 1st Division advanced to the attack again. North of Haig and on the Yser the once more. Gheluvelt was re-taken with heavy fighting during the whole of the day the bayonet in the afternoon. The moving left the situation unchanged. The line of spirit in this remarkable counter-attack. the 11th Brigade (4th Division) was broken, which restored connection between the 1st but the ground was recaptured. The situa- and 7th Division and almost restored the tion was already serious, and Foch promised original line, was Brigadier-General Fitzto send up French infantry and artillery in Clarence, V.C., commanding the 1st Guards Brigade (1st Division); and the rally coalesced later in the same part of the field.

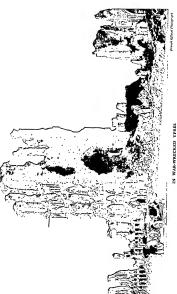
forced the London Scottish, despite a des- of Wytschaete. perate defence, back towards Wulverghem. an entrenched line north of Wulverghem.

them hard enough. Then it was that once the coast, there to be destroyed or captured. again interposition came at the eleventh The worst of the crisis was over, though hour. Some battalions of French infantry it may not have seemed to be so at the time. attacked on the left of the 2nd Cavalry Divi- for anxious days followed. On 2nd Novemsion and checked the enemy's advance. ber the 16th French Corps which Foch had

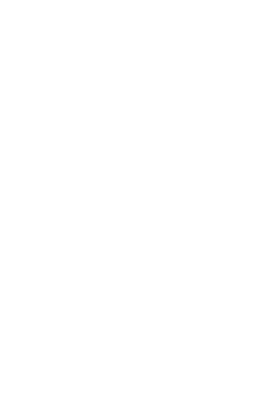
about the 2nd Worcesters (5th Brigade, 2nd their troops held off till the head of the 16th Division) and the Berkshires whom he sent French Army Corps arrived, and, at once forward in accordance with plan. General attacking, regained the western end of Wyt-FitzClarence was killed about a fortnight schaete. The position of the 3rd Corps, which had also been rendered precarious This extremely close shave thoroughly by the loss of Messines, was strengthened awakened General Foch to the gravity of by the arrival of the troops sent from Bailthe situation, and on the urgent representa- leul, and its commander (Pulteney) was able tions of General French he agreed to send by to draw back his left towards Neuve-Eglise next morning a French mixed force of the and form a flank facing north and protecting strength of a division to concentrate on the an important artillery position. It was able line St. Eloi-Wytschaete, thence advancing also to threaten to take in flank the German to attack the left flank of the Germans on advance on the Wytschaete-Messines ridge. Haig's right front. The 9th French Corps At midday then the situation was as follows: on Hair's left was similarly to attack south- the 1st Cavalry Division was in an entrenched east against the enemy's right. 31st Octo- position running east and north-east of ber had been the great day for Britain, Wulverghem, in touch on the right with the perhaps the greatest, but the danger was re-constructed line of Pulteney's and Corps, not past. During the following night the and on the left with the and Cavalry Diviand Cavalry Division was heavily attacked sion. The and Cavalry Division, stiffened all along the Wytschaete-Messines ridge, by the French advance, was drawn in to The Germans got into Wytschaete, broke the south of Wytschaete, in touch with the through the lines north of Messines, and 16th French Corps holding the western end

The 1st Corps, so hard pressed the day A counter-attack re-established the line at before, was again bitterly attacked. Part 3 o'clock in the morning; another German of it was driven from its trenches, but came attack at 6 o'clock drove back the 2nd back to them again. It held. But its losses Cavairy Division and took Wytschaete had been very heavy, and the 7th Division again. This loss, coupled with the seizure was left only 2000 strong. The 3rd Cavairy of the ridge north of Messines, forced the Division was thrown in to help it; and no 1st Cavalry Division back conformably to praise can be too high for the part which the cavalry played during these two days of Thus here a situation had been reached most imminent danger to the British line, not unlike that at Gheluvelt the day before. Nor must the share taken by the 16th French Since 30th October the cavalry corps and Corps be ignored. Had they arrived but an the troops attacked had been holding on, hour later on Sunday, 1st November, the bleeding and exhausted, to the Wytschaete- German advance would have so gained in Messines ridge against overwhelming num- volume and impetus that nothing could have bers. The French troops, marching up to saved Mont Kemmel, or have prevented them help them, were still some way off, and other from driving a wedge into the middle of the troops sent from Bailleul were also not yet British line. Such a wedge at such a point within reach. At 10 a.m. of 1st November would have cut off all the British, French, the 2nd Cavalry Division was retiring on and Belgian troops lying to the north of an Mont Kemmel, which they were in no con- east-and-west line through Mont Kemmel, dition to hold if the Germans came up after and would have hemmed them in against

The German momentum was arrested, and lent, and a French Cavalry Division (Con-



All that is left of the once beautiful Cloth Hall



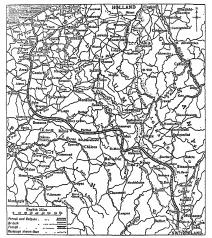
had already done well.

There was no great attack for some days the spirit of optimism was still in the ascend- to break through, ended in failure. ant: but on the 10th all hopes of an advance were dissipated by Foch's report to French struggle which had lasted during the last 15th Corps were ranged against him.

neau's) with the 1st British Cavalry Division The attack of 11th November, and the in support, were holding the Wytsehaete- repulse by Haig's 1st Corps, rank with those Messines ridge, and a very hard task they that preceded it as the most historic in the had, for the Germans persistently attacked, story of the defence of the Ypres salient. and the fight swaved backwards and for- The first assoult was made along the Menin wards. The British 1st Corps (1st and 2nd road on the front held by the 1st (Guards), Division and 7th Division) was also almost 7th, and 15th Brigades. The line was almost at the extremity of its effort. Feeh could overwhelmed by weight of numbers; it was send no more men to support it, and all that pierced, but it was restored. At noon the could be done was to patch its worn line up critical point changed to the right, where with part of the 2nd Division. With the the French were driven out of their trenches, help of these the shattered 7th Division, and fell back on Verbranden Molen. Genereduced to the strength of less than a brigade, ral Vidal called on General Haig for help, was sent back to billets for rest. Some and though the heavy fighting on the Menin anxiety was felt about the Indian corps, road had used up most of the 1st Corps but these troops also justified the confidence reserves, sufficient help was forthcoming to represent in them; and no break occurred, enable the French to hold their own, though, In the reaction of mind resulting from escape to British and French fighting side by side, from disaster, the belief sprang up and the situation remained full of anxiety all day. flourished for a few days that the Germans. In the early afternoon a fresh attack of great were again with leaving. The idea was in violence was delivered farther north against part fortered by the report of Russian sue- the 5th Brigade; and about 3 p.m. the career in the Eastern theatre of war, but it Prussian Guard was massed in the woods had no substantial foundation. Fortunately about the Menin road for what was meant it did not interfere with the detrainment of to be the culminating asseult. The assault, strong French reinforcements, including however, was exught in an enfillading fire the 20th Corps, in the Yores area on 4th and before it could get fully under way, and from 5th November. British Territorial units, their initial discomfiture the enemy never including the Artist's Rifles, the Honour- really recovered. Severe fighting continued able Artillery Company, the Queen's West- till darkness set in; the defence was most minsters. Hertfordshire and Warwickshire severely tested, and the defenders lost very Territorials, were also now arriving in heavily. The Guards Brigade was left with France to join the London Scottish, who only 4 officers and 300 men, and other units suffered in hardly a less degree. But the enemy's losses very greatly exceeded these, after this, though fighting went on with vary- and they were paid without effecting their ing success all along the line from La Bassée object. The line, save for a few trenches, to the sea. A conference between Foeh and was left unbroken, and searcely hent, and French was held on 8th November, in which this, the culminating German effort in 1914 In the north, on the British left, the

that an attack on a great scale had begun on fortnight in October had compelled the the French and Belgian lines from Ypres French Higher Command to adopt the to the sea. The Germans had thrown in expedient of flooding the country to prevent five fresh corps brought up from the south. a German advance. The chief incidents in eaptured Dixmude, and were fighting for it may be briefly recapitulated. The line the line of the Yser. Early on the morning on the north side of the Ypres salient was of the 11th, Haig reported that he was being held by two French divisions, which had heavily shelled and that two fresh German resisted all the German attacks at Bixsehoote army corps, the Prussian Guard and the and Langemarck. French Territorials and Marines continued the line to Dixmude;

between Dixmude and the sea the Belgians The Belgians retired behind the railway. lined the Yeer canal. On the 18th October and though the Germans stormed the emvon Billow scized the bridge-head at Nieu- bankment and took Ramscapelle, they were port, but could advance no farther. Some driven back into the floods on 31st October British monitors, mounted with 6-inch guns, by the Belgian and French Colonial troops.



d Belgium at the beginning of February, 1915-six months after the declaration of war

the Belgians back to the railway embankment. line. The Yser had been dammed near Nieuport. On the 28th it overflowed, and the Germans on the Western Front became the established

shelled the Germans from the sea: and the The sluices were then opened wide. Many German troops made their next effort farther hundreds of Germans were drowned in the east, at St. Georges, where they crossed the rising floods, and the impossibility was river on 24th and 25th October, and drove demonstrated of any advance along the coast

From this time onwards trench warfare found themselves up to the knees in water. character of the operations, broken only to restore to it the aspect of mobile tactics. remarked that from 30th November, 1914, to February, 1915, the French Higher as in heavy guns and machine-guns,

beyond local operations. General Joffre's a vain thing."

be attempts, always costly and usually futile, ing himself to "nibbling" the enemy. But it was true that the Allies at this time The French official account of the first six were reposing confidence on two hopes, the months of the war, published early in 1915, first that the German offensive in the West was broken, and that the German defensive must be in its turn broken by the accumu-Command had not thought it advisable to lating reinforcements of the British armies; embark on offensive operations. It con- and the second that the Russian offensive, fined itself to local attacks, the main object increasingly successful in Galicia and the of which was to hold in front of our armies Carpathians, after a preliminary disaster as large a number of German corps as in East Paland, must eventually compel possible, and thus in hinder the withdrawal the Germans to withdraw forces from the of the troops which the German General West to the East. In the meantime there Staff was anxious to dispatch to Russia, were ecrtain facts, minimized by the Allies Germany, during this perind, maintained at the time, but significant that the Gersome 47 army corps on the Western Front mans were very far from being exhausted, (out of the 52 which were there when the 'The first was a very well planned German last atterant was made to reach the Channel attack north-east of Snissons, which swept ports). The reasons for the absence of the French local troops from a bridge-head offensive operations on the part of the Albes on the Aisne, and long after was to make its is ascribed in part to the climatic conditions, effect noticeable in the attack and defence which, in the unusually rainy winter of 1914- of the Chemin des Dames. General Joffre's 15, were such as to diminish the effectiveness memorandum to General French, dated of offensive operations and to add to the 19th January, 1915, at a time when the costliness of any undertaken. Lord French British Commander believed that combined has more frankly stated the reason for quiese- military and naval operations might be underence as attributable to the comprehension taken to remove the Germans from the borne in on himself, as on the French, that Belgian coast, is also explanatory of the situ-"given forces fairly equally matched you atton. It remarks that the French General can bend but you cannot break your enemy's Staff considered a German offensive protrench line". That principle is not novel bable in the near future. The French front in military history; it cannot be evaded, must therefore be made absolutely secure. though it may be modified by the ability of 1f broken, for example, about Roye and either side to mass a great preponderance of Alantdidier, the consequences to the Allies men at given points of attack, as indeed was would be of the most serious description. shown when, with smaller forces numerically. In addition, the Allies must place themselves Haig crumpled up the Hindenburg trench in the position of being able to assume the line at Cambrai in the closing months of the offensive. They must, therefore, never war. A more impregnable obstacle to an lose sight of the decisive arcsult and all Allied success in offensive operations was secondary operations must give way. General the shortage in ammunition, which was acute, Joffre added that operations towards Ostendand remained so for many months, as well Zeebrugge, though important, were secondary to the principal need of the accumula-The French Higher Command, there- tion of reserves. "The German menace", fore, attempted very little during the winter he observed in a prophetic phrase, " is not

daily communiqué usually contained one. In the period under consideration the sentence: "From the Argonne to the principal British operations took place Vosges there is nothing to report", which between 14th and 19th December. They was typical of the stagnation, and has a began with a combined French and British better foundation in fact than the other attack on the line Hollebeke-Wytschaete sentence attributed to him that he was limit- ridge. The French employed 5 regiments where the 2nd Battalion Royal Scots and 1st corps was asked to demonstrate in order Battalion Gordons were operating; and the French 32nd Corps attacked to the north of the 16th Corps on the line Klein-Zillebeke-Hollebeke. It had been arranged that action should begin on this flank, the British coming in as progress was made. But progress was slow, the weather was dreadful, the ground a quagmire; and the British and and 3rd Corps could do no more than mark time and demonstrate. The deadlock in this local operation remained for two days, and meanwhile an attack by the French (de Maud'huv) north of Arras (16th and 17th) gained some ground near Notre Dame de Lorette, but was not successful to any degree commensurate with the cost.

On the 18th General French proposed to mass the 16th French Corps and his 2nd British Corps for an attack on Wytschaete. but by this time de Maud'huy was beginning to call for reinforcements for his Arras attack, where the Germans had regained the ground they had lost at Notre Dame de smooth working of the military machine in its

of the 16th Corps on the British left flank, obliged to supply them, while the British to relieve pressure. On the 19th trenches were captured by the 3rd and 4th Corps. The Indian corps gained trenches and lost them again. On the 21st the Germans again attacked and took Givenchy, only to lose it once more. On the evening of the 21st the 1st Corps was ordered to take over the Indian corps line. Thus in a give-andtake struggle between forces approximately equal in numbers the line swayed to and fro, but except on the larger-scale maps the gains and losses were imperceptible. The failures were optimistically described as part of the wearing-down process. It is, at least, as likely that the causes of the failure were that the Germans were too strong, and that, as may be apprehended from the story of the engagements between 14th and 19th December at Wytschaete and at Arras, there was very far from being any real unity of command on the Allied front. Goodwill there was, but efficiency due to the Lorette. The French 16th Corps was intricately dependent parts there was not.

CHAPTER IV

THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGNS IN 1914

Russia's part in the war during 1914 divides itself disjointedly into two parts. The first was the Russian invasion of East Prussia, which, successful at first, collapsed under von Hindenburg's lethal thrust in the Masurian Lakes, and the battle named by the victors Tannenberg; and was followed by the soldiers' battle of Augustovo, in which pathians.

The German Head-quarters Staff, which presumably knew more of the Russian capabilities of mobilization than any European War Office, appears to have underestimated the rate at which it could take place, and to have ruled out the likelihood of any invasion of German territory by Russian forces. It was presumed that before such an invasion part of the German advantage was lost. The could assume a dangerous aspect, the Gersecond was the campaign in Galicia, and the mans would be able to release from their first defeats of the Austro-Hungarian armies reserves, and from the Western Front, ample by General Ruzsky. This had been pre- forces to deal with it. Russian generals. ceded by the Austrian invasion of Poland, however, believed that their armies and and it was followed by the swift Russian organization would be able to exchange the advance, the fall of Lemberg, the investment traditional Russian defensive strategy for of Przemysl, and the fighting which carried one of offence, and would be able to the Russians into the passes of the Car- undertake a campaign against the most vulnerable portion of German territory in

events to be based on unsound premises, Germany, and a useful pawn in war or in but it was the course which events took that the negotiations which follow war. Moreproved the expectations of either side to over, East Prussia, with Königsberg the be wrong. The Russians knew that the cradle of the Prussian monarchy, had a senti-Germans had underestimated the rapidity mental value to Germany, and its recovery of their mobilization, and had posted inade- would be necessary to Prussian prestige. quate forces in East Prussia. If, however, 'The routes by which an invasion of the the Germans underestimated the Russian province could be made were few. Three mobility, the Russians overestimated the railways crossed the frontier. The first was value of their own early successes, and were the trunk road from Petrograd to Berlin. tempted by them to place themselves in which crossed the Niemen at the fortress of positions which the superior German staff Kovno, passed the frontier at Wirhaller.work rendered untenalile, and, being held Eydtkuhnen, and went on through Instertoo long, led to ruinous disaster.

Russian dash into East Prussia was governed stok, went past the small fortress of Osowiec, by the self-sacrificing desire of the Russians crossed the frontier at Grajevo, and at Lyck to lend the readjest possible support to entered the Masurian Lake region on its way France by diverting German forces from to Königsberg. The third line earne up the west to the east; and it may be true that from Warsaw to Mlawa, thence through this desire was the balancing factor in send- Evlan to Danzig. The obstacles to invasion ing the Russian forces forward at a time were not fortresses, but lake and swamp when a more cautious attitude would have and scarcity of roads. The Russian plan of been wiser and more productive. The campaign made provision for sending armies suecess of the Galician campaign points to along the uppermost and lowest of these the certainty that a more defensive attitude three routes. The northern, or Vilna army in the north, coupled with a vigorous under General Rennenkampf, was concenoffensive where the Central Powers were trated behind the Niemen, and was hased on weakest, namely, on the Austro-Hungarian Kovno and Grodno. The southern, or front, would have averted the immediate Warsaw army, under General Samsonoff, disaster, and might have changed the whole was concentrated behind the Narew, It course of the war. But war is made up of detached an advance-guard to march into the uncertainties in which a balance can seldom Masurian Lakes in the direction of Lyek: be struck correctly beforehand; and the but its main route was through Mlawa and policy of attacking East Prussia had much Soldau. to recommend it. It was natural for Rennenkampf's army, which was to march Russian strategists to argue that, if an advance direct east on Köniesberg, comprised the men.

Fast Prussia. Both views were shown by taken it would be a perpetual menace to burg and Allenstein. Next to this was the It has been not unjustly assumed that the branch line which left the main line at Bialy-

through Poland on Germany were contem- 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 12th Army Corps with plated, the northern flank must be cleared. the 3rd and 4th Reserve Divisions; and That was, as should have been, the object 5 cavalry divisions, including the Guard-a of the invading armies; for, though history total strength of about a quarter of a million recorded Russian marches through this men. This army preceded its march with territory in other centuries, and though several minor successes, such as that at civilians and journalists spoke lightly of a Eydtkulmen on the frontier (6th August). march through East Prussia to Berlin, soldiers and began its advance in force on 16th knew very well that the defensive lines of August. On the 17th Rennenkampf's vanthe Vistula, with the fortresses of Danzig, guard came into touch with the German 1st Graudenz and Thorn, would not be carried (Königsberg) Army Corps at Stallupönen. without great efforts and expenditure of The Germans fought a delaying action and drew off in good order towards Gumbinnen. Nevertheless, if East Prussia could be In front of Gumbinnen was fought the first but Rennenkampf made no attempt to perform enveloping movements, preferring to burg on the 23rd-24th: and thenceforward stricken along the roads to Berlin. his advance was unopposed. His left was securely held as far as the River Alle, and dazzling.

considerable action of the Eastern campaign. were towards Lyck, either through Osowice The Russians were advancing on a front of or farther south, and thenceforward by about 35 miles from Pilkallen to Goldap and detours to avoid the lakes. The German the railway bisected it; and they outnum- opposition was less determined than that hered the Germans by five to one. The encountered by Rennenkampf, and was, in fighting began on the right at Pilkallen, the early stages, offered only by the Landwehr which was cleared without much difficulty: troops of middle-aged men. Only one corps of the active army, the 20th (Allenstein) Corps was in the field at this stage of the crash, in the steam roller fashion with which operations. Allenstein was taken by Sam-Russian effort was so mistakenly associated, sonoff, and Frankenau after a stiff fight with through the enemy's centre. On the 20th, the 20th Corps (23rd and 24th August). On after a brief artillery preparation, the Russian the same day that Rennenkampf entered infantry carried the German positions at the Insterburg, Samsonoff had broken the point of the bayonet, but the fighting lasted resistance of the weak forces opposed to him, all day, and the Königsberg corps (com- and the Russians as an army had driven the manded by a German general of Huguenot Germans from all that part of East Prussia descent, von François) fought bravely. One east and south of the main railway line. of the German cavalry divisions even retook Rennenkampf's front faced south-west on Pilkallen, but could not hold it, and there the line Friedland-Gerdauen-Nardenburgwas fighting at Goldap on the 21st, before the Angerburg. Samsonoff occupied the tri-Germans under von François' command, angle Soldau-Allenstein-Frankenau. Their withdrew, badly mauled, through Gum- respective cavalry screens were seeking touch binnen to Insterburg. They had fought a with one another. In a few days it seemed good delaying action, and you François was that the two invading armies would join probably right in retiring from Insterburg hands, and half a million Russians would without further attempt there to check the threaten the Vistula. The eivilian inhabi-Russians. Rennenkampf reached Inster- tants of East Prussia were streaming panie-

Till this time the German Great General (southern) wing pressed forward from Goldap Staff, absorbed in the Western Operations, to Angerburg on the edge of the Masurian had been content to neglect the Eastern lake country and thence followed a cross- threat, and had disposed, all told, only 5 country railway to Allenburg and reached army corps, the Königsberg and Allenstein, a point on the Königsberg main line, and as well as the 17th, 5th, and 6th, for emer-Tilsit. The northern portion of East Prussia gencies on the Russian front. But after Gumbinnen new measures became imperathe cavalry was pushed yet farther forward. tive, and the first and most historical was to Reports began to appear that Rennenkampf entrust the command of the forces to oppose had invested the fortress of Königsberg, the Russians to General Paul von Hindenwhich was not the case, but the prospects of burg, then a retired soldier of sixty-seven his army and its progress were sufficiently living at Hanover. Von Hindenburg had fought in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Samsonoff's army of about the same and had advanced to the rank of Corps Comstrength as that of Rennenkampf's, and mander by conscientious regularity. In his consisting of 5 army corps and 3 cavalry long period of service with the Königsberg divisions, had been meanwhile advancing corps he had made a minute study of the with success from the line of the Narew. The topography of East Prussia which none knew country was much more difficult; and the better; his army manœuvres had for many advance was split into three lines. The years been practised over it, and he was a easiest and most direct was along the War- master of its tactical opportunities. Von saw-Soldau reilway. The second and third Hindenburg was a man of character; he had

ality, namely General von Ludendorff, who they had not occupied the road leading from was appointed Chief of Staff in the East Osterode through Gilgenburg to Soldau, Prussian campaign. Ludendorff, who had nor the two railways leading up to that led the assault at Liège, rose in fame side junction of rail and road. Von Hindenby side with von Hindenburg, and became in burg's first step was to occupy Soldau junc-1918 the actual Commander-in-Chief of the tion and the road, and thus took the first German armies.

was that of beating the Russian armies with and a defensive position with marshes in one German force barely equal in number front and a good road behind. Samsonoff to that commanded either by Rennenkampf was not blind to the disadvantage at which or Samsonoff, and composed of second-line he had so swiftly been placed. With Soldau troops. The problem before them could in enemy hands he might be out off from be solved only by a superiority of mobility, the best line of retreat and of supply. He which would enable them to attack the tried on the 27th to retake it, but the Germans Russian armies separately. The possibility were not likely to yield anything so valuable of attaining such mobility was conferred on except to superior force, and that force them by the unequalled strategic railway Samsonoff could not localize, for in his system of Prussia, which assembled for Hin-triangle he was ill supplied with roads for denburg and Ludendorff a force increased concentration. He was driven yet farther every hour by troop trains on the main line back from this line of communication, and from Thorn to Osterode. These localities at Neidenburg his left became more eramped are mentioned because the German com- and his army nearer the marshes. Farther manders decided to deal first with Samson- north, near Hohenstein, the Germans hamoff, whose forces, though encountering even mered another tightening wedge into the less opposition than those of Rennenkampf, band encireling him. At Hohenstein the were situated on ground on which they Russians tried to break through this first would find it very difficult to deploy, and the version of a Hindenburg line to the northocculiarities of which they must know less west. But once again it was the Germans well than their opponents.

of Graudenz, Thorn, and Posen, and by the Russians had abandoned), and after bringing circuitously from Königsberg the corps commanded by von François, Hinden- were driven farther in in this area also. burg was able to bring up his forces on the as a maximum.) One may say, therefore,

to aid him a man of equally strong person- Soldau-Allenstein-Frankenau triangle, but trick by Wednesday, 26th. He had now a The problem that confronted these two focal point from which he could reinforce, who were handiest in bringing up reinforce-By laying under contribution the garrisons ments (from the Allenstein district which fighting on the 26th, 27th, 28th, the Russians

The abandonment of Allenstein by the spot to a total of some nine divisions. (The Russians was a blunder more irreparable estimate is a Russian one and may be regarded than their neglect to secure Soldau. The loss of Soldau exposed their left to outflankthat Hindenburg had some 160,000 troops, ing; but the abandonment of Allenstein pave some of them second-line, to put against to the Germans command of a still better Samsonoff's 200,000, exclusive of cavalry. line of railway, and a fine road. Thus, when But when the opposed forces were engaged Samsonoff was presumably awaiting another Hindenburg had certainly a local superiority blow on his left wing, Hindenburg was for he was able to bring his full weight to massing by road and rail, and by every bear, while Samsonoff's forces were most species of motor vehicle, a force to envelop unhappily distributed. The Russians had the Russians on their right. Hindenburg's advanced with little prevision of the blow northern forces thus assembled swept round that might fall on them; their aviators were Samsonoff's right as far as Bischoffsburg. not numerous, their intelligence department The Germans, coming still farther round, was either wanting in intelligence or in took Passenheim after a bloody struggle, loyalty. Their army was massed in the and were now placed on three sides of the had as targets masses of infantry which could they were being driven, were lost. By the 30th whole battalions and regiments were surrendering; and the rest were streaming in disorganized retreat along the only road open to them by way of Ortelsburg and Johannisburg. On 31st August General Samsonoff, who had borne himself with great personal bravery, was killed by a shell which burst amid his staff. The Germans took 90,000 prisoners; the killed and wounded numbered another 30,000. Except for 1 army corps, which escaped through Ortelsburg intact, and about half another, which straggled after it, and eavalry or infantry which escaped in flying fragments, the army of the Narew had ceased to exist.

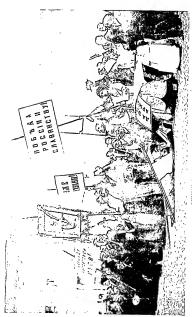
Great as the victory was-the greatest victorious engagement of the war till 1918 could cross the Niemen and cut the Petro--the Germans strove without pause to grad-Vilna-Warsaw railway, soon found that convert it into a greater one by cutting off their 4 army corps, helped though it was strike at the Russian northern army's comburg, Angerburg, and Goldap with Gum- would bear heavy motor transport, and it seented danger. He served his country best difficult. by a rapid retreat, and fell back quickly on

Russians, with good roads on which they Russian frontier province, was occupied on could bring up their guns. The guns com- 15th September: and Hindenburg sent pleted what the infantry had begun. They General von Morgen forward towards the Niemen. Here, however, the German sucneither deploy for attack nor manœuvre to cesses ended. The northern Russian army avoid it. Their batteries, ignorant of the recrossed the river on the 23rd, and General roads between the marshes towards which Ruzsky, a far more capable leader than those whom Hindenburg had defeated and put to flight, was sent up from Galieia to reorganize the defence.

General Ruzsky had not a superhuman task in repairing the disasters that had overtaken the Russians in their first attempt at invasion. Rennenkampf had brought back his army eorps intact, save for losses which could be repaired quickly from the depots; and though the first stupendous blunder of Russian generalship was probably the origin of that distrust which gradually sapped the enthusiasm of the Russian soldier for the war, yet for a time at all events the army as a whole seemed unperturbed by its calamities. The Germans, who may have hoped for a yet greater extension of their victory if they Rennenkampf. Hindenburg advanced as by superior artillery, was quite insufficient quickly as possible from the southern area to to exploit the situation. On the Russian side of the frontier was no network of munications. He marched towards Norden- strategic railways; few of the Russian roads binnen and Eydtkuhnen as his goals. But was as difficult to deploy German armies Rennenkampf, whose flourishing demonstra- among the Russian swamps as it had been tion had not disturbed the Germans in their to manœuvre Russian armies among the task of destroying his colleague, was at any Masurian Lakes. The early autumn rains rate prudent enough to withdraw when he made the task of the invading Germans more

By 23rd September, when Rennenkampf's the Niemen and his bases. The retreat cost rear-guard crossed the Niemen, the Germans him some 30,000 men and 150 guns captured occupied all the chief strategic points between in rear-guard actions. On 11th September the river and their own frontier, including Rennenkampf's army evacuated Insterburg, Augustovo, a place which derives its importand on the 15th no Russians were left in East ance from its position as a road junction. A Prussia except as prisoners, and the Ger- railway runs from the fortress of Grodno on mans had crossed the frontier. Hinden- the Niemen to Augustovo, and thence burg's further successes comprised the defeat through Suvalki back to the Niemen at of two new Russian army corps (one fortified Olita. Neither side could use it in Siberian and one Finnish) at Lyck, though its damaged condition. The chief physical the Russians fought well, and another suc- feature of the region is the deep Russian cess in the first engagement at Augustovo. forest, on the western edge of which Suvalki, the administrative centre of the Augustovo stands. Intricate chains of lakes





RUSSIA'S ENTRY INTO THE WAR Citizens of Petrograd offering up prayers for the victory of Russia's

its lakes, and not in their number, from the in the clear space about Augustovo. The Masurian country on the other side of the Germans had laid out their position with border. The Russian defences rested, how- eustomary skill so as to command the exit ever, not on these, except in so far as they from the forest with cross fire. The Ruswere natural defences, but on the River sians crossed the Niemen-Augustovo-Niemen and the River Bobr, which runs away Bobr canal, which runs in two branches at south-westwards from Lipsk through Oso- right angles, with Augustovo at the angle, wice, almost at right angles to the Niemen, executed a wide turning movement, and got The Niemen is a formidable obstacle, 200 their heavy guns to bear on Augustovo from yards wide; the Bobr is a comparatively west and north-west. They took the town insignificant stream, but deep enough to on 1st October, and the infantry pressed on drown man and horse, and it runs through with a furious zeal, clearing the few roads a swampy valley of impassable marshes. of the obstacles the Germans had left as they There is only one good passage, a paved road went. which crosses the river at Osowice. Osowice might have been supposed to be very vul- as best they might. They called their troops narrow eauseway which led to it.

of Grodno, and a point farther south, where tions here were at a standstill, the River Dubissa falls into the Niemen. At

stud the country between Suvalki and the fought the Germans through the forest, hand Niemen, which differs only in the size of to hand: but the decisive action was fought

The Germans recognized that they were was only a third class fortress with forts that beaten, and that they must cut their losses nerable to the siere guns which the Germans off Osowice, which celebrated the raising had at command. Nevertheless it dis- of the siege with a useful sortic, and on ard tinguished itself notably in the German and ath October they fell back as fast as they operations against the Niemen-Bobr defences could towards their own frontier. Augustovo by resisting all the efforts in the last week of was a soldiers' battle, of which the heroes September, 1914, to capture it. Its im- were the Russian and Siberian infantrymen. munity was in part due to the impossibility some of whom marched thirty miles in a day of surrounding it, because of its protective (3rd Siberians) and finished with a bayonet mosts of marshes, and the impracticability charge. But the operations were well of capturing it by direct assault along the planned; they restored confidence to the Russian army after its tremendous disaster; The failure at Osowice was overshadowed they rehabilitated Russian generalshipby the greater failure of the whole German though Ruzsky's reputation was already well operations against the Niemen line. The founded-and they proved to Germany that attempt to cross the river was made at two the Russian danger was one that must be points, at Drusenkini, some 30 miles north dealt with. For the rest of the winter opera-

General Ruzsky had been sent up from Drusenski the Germans endeavoured to cross the southern area of the Russian operations. by pontoons, and three most costly attempts where a success was won which threw into failed on 2xth September. Cossacks crossed darker relief the failures of Samsonoff and the river from east to west at nightfall and Rennenkampf. The Austro-Hungarian drove the Germans back 8 miles. At the armies had reversed the experiences of the Dubissa crossing the Germans could not German forces, and after a march into succeed in approaching the river, which was Russian territory, which was not dissimilar protected by entrenched Russian infantrymen from that which the Russians had conducted on the western bank. The Russian heavy in East Prussia, had been as ignominously guns were posted on the opposite bank. The bundled out again. As a substitute for action fighting lasted till the morning, when the which Germany could not at the opening Germans retreated. The double operation of the war undertake on the Eastern Front. entirely failed: the Germans had to with- the Austro-Hungarian armies had been draw, harassed by Russian cavalry, whenever urged to advance by the German Headthese could find an opening. The Russians quarters Staff, and once again a miscalculamobilization and the fighting weight of the advance behind Warsaw if Dankl's First Russian armies. There was excuse for the Army had been successful. German belief that a thrust by Austriafrontier, with only two spurs towards enemy at Brody. The main line crossed the frontier at Tamopol.

The operations undertaken by the Austro-Hungarian command were designed not to put the southern Russian armies out of combined numbered about a million men, army for reinforcements, Germany had a army corps at Posen

tion was made as to the rapidity of Russian the task of the Third Austrian Army in an

The Grand-Duke Nicholas and the Rus-Hungary would gravely discommode Russia, sian General Staff were aware of the Austrian and should pave the way for ultimate com- intentions, and went steadily on with their bined German and Austro-Hungarian own mobilization till they had a superiority action against her, because, whereas the in numbers as well as in fighting and march-Russian railway communications on the ing capacity. No serious opposition was Poland side were few, there were two main offered to the advance of Dankl's First Army, lines of railway on the Austrian side running which had an easy and unresisted march to parallel to the frontier, and fed with strategic within ten miles of Lublin. The Third railways like the ribs of a herring bone on Austrian Army pursued as uneventful a either side. On the Russian side the main march towards Kielce. Brushes with fronline from Warsaw through Lublin to Kieff tier posts and scouts confirmed the impreswas on an average 50 miles from the sion that Russia was unready; the advance resembled a joy-march. On the line, howterritory, one from Kovel towards, but not ever, from Lublin to Kholm, with a good reaching, Vladimir-Volynsk, and another railway behind them, the Russians steadily from Royno to Lemberg, cutting the frontier massed an army of 400,000, commanded by General Ivanoff, with Generals Evert and Plehve as his subordinates. By the first days of September this army was in a position to check the further advance of Dankl.

Meanwhile von Auffenberg's Second action but to detain them and prevent their Army, which was intended not as a spearcollaboration with the armies of the north. head but as a flanking shield, had found that There were 3 armies at command. The the Russians did not accept this version of chief offensive was undertaken by the First the action intended for it. As early as 11th Austrian Army under General Dankl, August reports from Vienna spoke of consisting of 7 army corps, approximately Russian cavalry demonstrations at Brody, on . 350,000 men. From its base on Przemysl the Second Army's right, and two days later and Jaroslav it was to push upwards in the came news of more violent cavalry actions. country between the Vistula and the Bug On the 17th Petrograd announced that the to Lublin and Kholm, there to cut and hold general advance of the Russian armies the main line from Warsaw to Kieff, and to against the Austrian had begun. Against threaten the communications behind War- von Auffenberg the advance was in most saw. While the First Army was thus advanc- capable hands. The chief command was ing it would have as protection from the held by General Ruzsky, who had a knoweast the Second Army under General von ledge of this part of Galicia and south-east Auffenberg, which would push north-east Russia comparable with that of Hindenburg from Lemberg, and hold Eastern Galicia. in East Prussia. On his left he had General Von Auffenberg had 5 army corps, sub- Brussiloff, and these two commanders had sequently increased to 6, and 5 cavalry with them some fourteen army corps, or divisions. There was a Third (Reserve) Army about 700,000 men. Ruzsky's army (Second) under the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, had the larger share, Brussiloff (Third) had which took little part in the operations, some 300,000 men, including the pride of the except as a feeder to the others, but protected cavalry. They outnumbered von Auffen-Dankl's western flank. The three armies berg's, who hastily called on the Archduke's

At the moment when Dankl, with the First and Breslau; these would have facilitated Austrian Army, was being held up. General pushing a wedge between his northern wing Lemberg towards Stryj. and Dankl's First Army. The Austrians fallen back.

Brussiloff, after making contact with General of double that number, after a short night's rest began the assault. whom reinforcements had been sent out, not

Ruzsky threw the whole of his forces in an They had not many guns, but more came up enveloping attack on von Auffenberg. With on 31st August, and an attack of great fury the Second Army he advanced along the rail- was concentrated on the Austrian position. way from Dubno and occupied Brody on 23rd The final assault of two Russian regiments August. On the 22nd Brussiloff on Ruzsky's (9th and 57th) picroed the Austrian line and left crossed the frontier at Woloczysk, on the Russians poured through, followed by the lower railway line from Lemberg and their guns. Once the breach was made the Tarnopol to Odessa. A road runs along- Austrian resistance collapsed: their troops side this railway, and Brussiloff's cavalry on lost temporarily all fighting value. Some the 23rd occupied Tarnopol, driving the 5000 Austrians were killed, and 32 guns Austrians before them. Little resistance captured. The Austrians had just time to was offered, and Brussiloff's army advanced blow up the steel bridge at Halicz, though to the River Zlota Lipa before engaging they cut off the retreat of many of their own strong forces of the enemy. There was men in doing so, and the only other bridge, heavy fighting here on 25th and 26th August at Chorodov, was also destroyed, so that the before the Austrians were pushed back to pursuit was checked while pontoon bridges the next line of defence, the River Gnila Lipa, were thrown across. But these were conwhich falls into the Dniester at Halicz. structed next day, and three divisions of While Brussiloff was thus pressing back Cossack cavalry got over and caught up the Auffenberg's southern wing, Ruzsky's army, retreat of what was now an entirely unspreading out on a wide front, was fighting organized army. The Russian infantry tireits way forward against his centre and was lessly followed, and pushed on south of

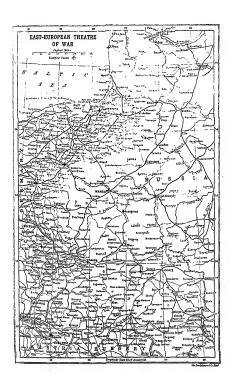
The right, or southern half of the Austrian were thus pushed steadily back, and, though army was shattered. At the other, the they fought well, were given no pause for a northern extremity, Ruzsky had been able week of fighting, while Ruzsky and Brussiloff to continue his outflanking thrust towards were continually spreading out so as to come Kamionka, 20 miles north-east of Lemberg. into touch with one another. The Russians and thus, by bending back the Austrian line, made contact on 26-27th August, and im- to shorten its central front, which was pitimediately opened a fresh attack along the lessly hammered. The Lemberg defences whole front against the outer defensive lines could no longer be held. Von Auffenberg's of Lemberg, on which the Austrians had army crumbled and fled westwards beyond Lemberg, its retreat harassed by Russian Fighting of the most severe kind went on cavalry, and rendered more difficult by the for two days, the Austro-Hungarian forces early autumn rain-storms. The Russians resisting desperately, and organizing con- had attacked reckless of losses: but they now tinual counter-attacks, so that though took interest for them. Lemberg fell, and trenches were taken and retaken, and then Anffenberg's army was captured by the ten lost again, this front was not pierced. But thousand. Many of the prisoners were they were pinned to their positions, and the Slavs, only too glad of the opportunity to Russians were numerically strong enough to surrender. The number of the prisoners keep them there while putting into action were estimated at 65,000: the Austro-Huna turning movement to the south. General garian losses in all could not have fallen short

Ruzsky on the 26th, sent General Radko Dankl, with his First Army, had remained Dimitrieff to swing wide to the south in the as helpless and inept a spectator of the valley of the Dniester. On 30th August the disasters overtaking his colleague as had flanking force, having travelled over very Rennenkampf in a similar but reversed posirough country, with no railways and the tion. He could neither advance north, nor worst of roads, arrived before Halicz, and turn east and south to aid von Auffenberg, to the Archduke Josef Ferdinand. The trians were driven southward parallel to the Archduke's army, under the stress of the Vistula, and then, as they retreated, the events of the last days of August, had been Russian cavalry got in among them. At reconstituted, reinforced by forces drawn Suchodola, at Krasnik, and at Frampol from the South Serbian front and stiffened there were fierce rear-guard engagements with some German troops. It was now offi- before the Austrian left was crowded back cially called the Austrian Fourth Army. The to join the remnants of von Auffenberg's Russian official reports referred to it as the army in the swamps between Tarnopol and "Tomaszow Army". The name was pro- Bielgoroj. The Austro-Hungarian armies bably conferred on it because it was towards were then falling back on the line of the San, Tomaszow that General Ruzsky was driving which runs from Przemysł through Jaroslav the wedge that was to separate Dankl's First to the Vistula. There was an advance line Army from you Auffenberg's defeated troops. of defences through Rawa Ruska to Grodek. This wedge reached its objective point during a fortress 30 miles east of Przemysl. These the first week in September, after a good deal defences were manned with the reinforced of confused fighting, and the Tomaszow forces of von Auffenberg's army along a line army then fell back towards Tarnograd and of 60 miles: and at Grodek the country was the swampy country north of it.

Meanwhile it had become evident to The attack began here, but the force of it to Turobin, all the Russian reinforcements army took refuge inside its defences.

from Dankl, Lut from the reserve army under being thrown on to this wing. The Aussuch that the line could not well be turned.

General Dankl that he must either break was cumulative farther north, and the Austhrough the northern barrier opposed to him trian line became bent back in an angle on by General Ivanoff, or retreat before be- either side of Rawa-Ruska. The defences coming cut off from his bases by the advance at this small Galician town were hardly more of Ruzsky's army. He made an attempt to than 8 miles in frontal length, and on this cut a way forward on 2nd September in the space the whole fury of the Russian attack direction of Lublin, but the advance could converged. The assault went on with not be maintained, and the attack having scarcely breathing space for more than a spent itself he was compelled to withdraw, week: and nowhere was fighting more to leaving 5000 prisoners behind. The Russians the credit of the Austro-Hungarian infantry, in their turn attacked Dankl on 4th Sep- who were driven back only foot by foot. The tember, and had an immediate success against battle of Rawa-Ruska was one of the bloodiest his centre at Krasnostaw, which is a village of the campaign in either East or West; and south-west of Kholm, and General Dankl the difficulties of the position which the perceived that his prospects of success were Russians at length took may be gathered infinitesimal, and that retreat might no longer from the fact that one point in them was be open to him if he delayed. The retreat protected by a series of six connecting lakes to the line of the San began at once: and with marshy ground cut up by dykesl It again one might find a parallel in it to the was not till 14th September that the Russians retreat of Rennenkampf. The distinction could claim a victory for the army of General was that Dankl's withdrawal of an army of Brussiloff, after a display of "the highest 300,000 men on an 80-mile front, its left wing energy, staunchness, and gallantry" on the hemmed in by the Vistula, its right never part of his troops. On the following day the able to escape from the oncoming Russian announcement was made that Grodck had forces, was a very creditable achievement. been occupied and Brussiloff's centre had Any mistakes and his army would have reached Moeziska, within a day's march of shared the fate of von Auffenberg's in an Przemysł. Ruzsky meanwhile was sweeping amplified degree. His retreat was not made the rear-guards of Dankl in front of him, and without severe losses. The first blow struck took Jaroslav by assault on 24th September. at him had been at Krasnostow in the centre: Thus Przemysł was cut off, east, north, and the second was at Opolie on his left, spreading south, and the remnants of von Auffenberg's





back the Russians. One rear-guard rested its San. left on the Vistula, the other rear-guard had at a very heavy cost, including 30,000 success.

Meanwhile General Dankl, though losing prisoners, in addition to those killed and men and guns in the Opolie-Turobin district, drowned in the action. On the other side had mached the San, to which he had pru- of the Vistula a Russian force had worked dentiv turned back his transport in advance its way up the river and threw a considerable of his retirement. Some of the transport number of troops across at Josefow where had reached there as early as 9th September, they joined other men of Ivanoff's armies the bulk of the army got there on 12th Sep- on the eastern bank. They met and detember. While the main body and the bag- feated a body of mixed German and Ausgare were getting across, the strong rear- trian troops at Sandomierz, while their guards to north and east were left to hold comrades were forcing the crossing of the

The Russians were now masters of all its right on the San; and the ground was Eastern Galicia. They had captured Stryj, marshy in front of the arc they made. But Stanislau, Halicz, Lemberg, Jaroslav, Brody, the Russians, flushed with victory, were not Lutz, Grodek, Tarnopol, Brezany, and all to be denied, and they broke through the the railway systems which led the way to arc long before the crossing of the San was the Carpathians. Przemysl held out, but accomplished, and followed the retreating could scarcely be relieved in face of the troops across the bridges. One bridge they losses which the Austro-Hungarian armies captured intact and held at Rzeszov, a few had suffered-losses estimated at some miles west of Tarnogrod. The crossing of 400,000 men, prisoners, wounded, and killed the San gave Dankl's First Army a position -as well as in guns. It was the flood tide, of comparative safety, but it was effected though not the high-water mark of Russian

CHAPTER V

THE BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN THE WEST IN 1915

The opening months of 1915 on the the beginning of February this corps reheavy artillery with which to respond to and the 1st Corps (opposite La Bassée). the German bombardments. Nevertheless. developed in the school of the most trying warfare that any volunteer army ever bad

British front in the west were marked by lieved the French troops (General d'Urbal), few engagements. The winter, cold and who had taken over trenches at Ypres at very wet, converted the difficult positions the end of November, 1914. The other of the Ypres salient into a muddy purgatory dispositions at this period were, south of -and endurance was made the harder Ypres, 2nd Corps, 3rd Corps, 4th Corps hecause of the shortage of shells and of (north of Neuve Chapelie), Indian Corps.

Prior to the arrival of the 5th Corps there the British Expeditionary Force was growing, had been two fierce little engagements, one, and an army of traditions and discipline, on 25th January, in the neighbourhood of La modelled on those of the old one, was being Bassée, where the British and French lines joined, and another over the old ground at Givenchy. At Givenchy the attack was to endure. The earliest complete corps to besten off, at La Bassee our front line arrive was the newly-formed 5th, under trenches were lost, but the second ones held, the command of General Sir Herbert and after a futile attempt by the Germans to Plumer, and consisted of the 27th and 28th improve the position (29th January) the lost Divisions, composed chiefly of British troops ground was recovered by the Irish and from India and Territorial battalions. At Coldstream Guards (1st February). The

the first V.C. of 1915 to Michael O'Leary, causes which were accidental, or should have a name that remained for a long time an ori- been removed by greater foresight. It is flamme of war in the recruiting campaign, probable, nevertheless, that it was fore-These actions at Cuinchy and Givenchy seem doomed to failure for the fundamental reason relatively unimportant when the five years' that the attack was not undertaken on a war is considered as a whole, but, like many sufficiently wide front, or with sufficient another, greater and smaller, in the grinding weight of men, or with that superiority of war of trenches, they had their share in artillery which, coupled with surprise, could moulding the British armies into the fighting alone ensure anything approaching a promachine they became. The force at this ductive break-through. The preliminaries time marked its increasing size by coalescing were excellent. The British airmon duly into two armies: the First under Sir Douglas bombarded Menin, Courtrai, and Douai, Haig, comprising the 1st, 4th, and Indian the railway junctions through which German Corps: the Second Army, under Sir H. reinforcements to the sector attacked could Smith-Dorrien, with the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th be brought up; the 300 guns loosed a devas-Corps. The new formations as they came tating bombardment, lasting thirty-five out were either fitted into these or formed minutes, on the barbed-wire entanglements part of a Third Army. Each army consisted and machine-gunned German trenches, and at this time of some 120,000 men.

February,1 in which the new 5th Corps, serious opposition. But only over part of it. which had experienced trying times after The troops chosen for the assault were they were weakest.

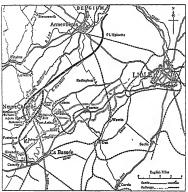
occasion was distinguished by the award of the time its failure appeared to be due to the troops sent forward were able to walk There were other minor engagements in over part of the ground bombarded without

its arrival, began to find its feet, and towards Rawlinson's 4th Army Corps on the left, March the weather cleared. On March 10th and the Indian Corps upon the right, on a General French broke the period of trench front of half a mile, which, as the action warfare with an attack at Neuve Chapelle. developed, broadened to a mile and a half. The heavy artillery had been greatly aug- The assault was undertaken, left to right, mented. Sir John French could command by the 23rd Infantry Brigade (Pinney) and a concentration of 300 guns, which at that 25th Infantry Brigade (Lowry-Cole), both time seemed unprecedentedly formidable; of the 8th Division and the Indian Corps. and he planned an attack which, if success- With the 25th Brigade the attack prospered. ful, would burst through the German line The 23rd Brigade was held up by a broad sufficiently far to give the attackers the sheet of wire partially demolished, and Aubers Ridge, on the other side of which the losses of the 2nd Scottish Rifles and lay the desired plain of Tourcoing and Lille. 2nd Middlesex were very heavy in conse-Surprise and a heavy bombardment were quence. It was only at great cost, and after the elements of this plan. Sir H. Smith- considerable delay, that the remains of the Dorrien was to demonstrate on the whole 23rd Brigade were able to get into alignment front of the Second Army, while the First with the advance of the 25th Division. The Army was to narrow down its attack to the 24th Brigade came up in support, and the Neuve Chapelle sector while making a secon- 1000 yards progress was made good. The dary attack with its own 1st Corps to the Indians on the right-Garwhali Brigade, south of the point most heavily assailed. Gurkhas, Dehra Duns, and other troops of Thus it was hoped German reinforcements the Meerut Division-supported by the would be unable to get up, and the wedge Leicesters and London Territorials, were would be driven through at the point where held up for a time, but forced a way forward and, supported by the 25th Brigade, took Neuve Chapelle (10th March) proved a Neuve Chapelle by midday. At half-past costly and unsuccessful experiment. At three the attack was renewed, having been extended to the west by the 21st Brigade of the 7th Division.

The British losses during the winter, despite the despitory character of the warfare, amounted to 20,000.

In this sector the objective was a small The expectations of the next day (11th) attack of the Indians on the Bois-du-Biez, by ruthlessly sending masses of men up

village. Moulin-du-Pietre. Here again the were early clouded by the presence of a thick attack was held up, and so was the renewed mist which made accurate artillery fire attack on the immediate right of it, where the impossible, and enabled the Germans to 2.1th Brigade had taken the place of the badly bring up reinforcements easily. Very much mauled 23rd. So also was the renewed later in the war the Germans utilized mist



re Chapelle: map showing the British positions on the eve of the a line before and after the fighting of soth-seth March, 1915

south-east of Neuve Chapelle. The end of the through it; but the use of massed attacks day came with the British and the Indianshold- was always contrary to British practice and ing what they had won, but with a doubtful theory, and it would have been impossible. prospect of improving on it. The demonstra- in view of the numbers at Sir John French's tions in support of this main attack had been disposal, to employ such means in 1015. limited to gun-fire along Smith-Dorrien's With no weapon, therefore, to force a way front, but had comprised an infantry attack through, the line remained held up in front at Givenchy by the 1st Corps on the south. of Moulin-du-Pietre in the north, and the This attack was carried out by the 6th Brigade Bois-du-Biez in the south, losing heavily (Fanshawe) and cost over 600 casualties. all the time from the German artillery, which

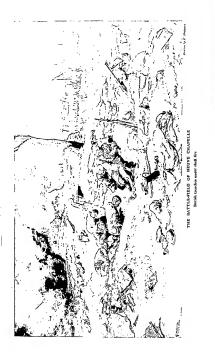
less than two miles.

men, of whom some 1800 were returned as in force. "missing". The German losses were estiof material value.

Germans attacked Smith-Dorrien's front at the explosion of a mine under a long-disthe way in which the bombardment beyond West Ridings and 1st Bedfords, and subse-

of course had the ranges marked. On the the British lines cut telephone wires and 12th the morning again broke misty, but as hampered the preparations for counterthe day cleared a determined attack was made attack. The 82nd Brigade (27th Division) on the fortified parts in the village and on the formed the chopping-block, and the 2nd wood. At Moulin-du-Pictre the 20th Cornwalls and 2nd Irish Fusiliers the chief Brigade was sent up and the 2nd Borderers, sufferers. The counter-attack, delayed till and Scots Guards, 1st Grenadiers, and a o'clock next morning, and conducted Gordons, and 6th Gordons, got into the out- largely by Irish troops, recovered part of skirts of the village and captured prisoners, the ground lost, but not all. Thencefor-But their losses were heavy, as were those ward, for a month, the daily attrition of of the 25th Brigade on their right. The trench warfare was resumed. The Germans. Germans now turned to counter-attack in inspired by the ideas of their "Easternmass; and at last the heavy toll of killed and ers", were standing on the defensive in the wounded began to fall on them instead of West, while maturing plans to break the on the assaulting British. But the enemy's Russian front, and, in general, reacted only ability to counter-attack, however costly the when action was forced on them by French the preliminary steps of such a offensive or British assaults. This defensive attitude might be, was in itself evidence that the did not preclude German offensive action; battle of Neuve Chapelle had exhausted its but it was never undertaken on the greater possibilities. It was broken off, and the scale which, according to German strategic Germans acquiesced in leaving the attackers teaching, was the only scale on which it could in possession of the ground won. This be conducted with profit. Even the great amounted to about 1000 yards on a front of poison gas-attack, which was the outstanding feature of the opening of the second The ground, together with prisoners num- Battle of Ypres in April, was rather an experibering 30 officers and 1650 men, had been mental gambit-afterwards developed to purchased at a cost of 562 officers and 12,239 the full-than a characteristic German assault

It was preceded by a long-drawn-out mated as rather greater than this, but there struggle on the smaller scale for the possession is no denying that some of our best brigades of Hill 60, a low ridge about a furlong in suffered very severely in a task that was not length in the Zillebeke region. The ridge specially productive. A small action fought was valuable as an observation post, of which by the 1st Wilts and 2nd Worcesters, near the British possessed too few and the Ger-Wytschaete, on the last day of the battle, mans many, for both then, and for two years was delayed by the mist, and added to the to come, the British lines, overlooked by the total of losses without achieving any result enemy, suffered increasingly from a galling fire. Both sides were now engaged in Two days afterwards (14th March) the mining, an operation to which subsequently the British called in the aid of competent St. Eloi in a surprise action, which followed geologists, and Hill 60 was mined by Monmouthshire men. In the evening of 17th puted post south-east of the village. This April the mines were fired, and the hill was attack was an exploitation of a new method immediately and successfully stormed by of attack, and was in that respect experi- Royal West Kents and 2nd Scottish Bormental: first a bombardment, then the derers. Sappers raced up on the heels of mine explosion, followed by a bombing attack the infantry, and in six hours the troops had by infantry, and completed by a detachment been dug in. German counter-attacks, preof sappers and machine-gunners to acquire ceded and supported by bombers, were sent the won and shattered ground. The whole forward throughout the night, and at halfthing was a model-and a lesson-even to past five next morning reinforcements (2nd

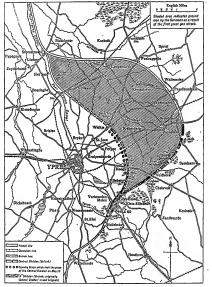




of action.

attacked.

quently 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry) were On the 22nd of April the Belgians still held sent up to shake the hold which the Germans the flooded Yser Canal as far as Bixschoote. had secured at the base of the hill. The last There the line was taken over by French supporting attack of the Yorkshiremen was Colonial and Territorial troops. Their made at seven o'clock in the evening of the sector extended to the Ypres-Poelcappelle rSth. and the Germans were swept from road, a mile east of Langemarck, where they their hold. The ground won by the British joined the British 5th Corps, consisting here was then consolidated, and the assaulters sat of the Canadian Division and the a8th and down grimly to hold on in face of an extremely 27th British Divisions, whose line bent round heavy German bombardment of the positions south, outside of Polygon Wood, to Hill 60. won. Some of the shells may have been gas. The Germans had been observed to be conshells. It was reported on this date by centrating opposite the French, where they officers in a dug-out immediately behind the had their 26th Corps (Duke of Württemberg) fighting line that they experienced a feeling and on 20th and 21st April they bombarded of suffocation, and that the eandles in the Ypres and the lines of communication. About shelter were extinguished by the noxious 5 p.m. on the 22nd they opened a heavy atmosphere. On Tuesday, 20th April, and bombardment from Bixschoote to Langeon Wednesday, 21st April, till late in the marck covering the French line and the left afternoon, the German bombardment con- of the Canadian sector. It was a sullen tinued, interspersed with counter-attacks afternoon with a light southerly breeze, and which had in their turn to be countered. The about five o'clock jets of vapour shot up from last effort on the British side was made by the German trenches. These gathered and the 1st Devons, and then, although the settled in a greenish-yellow cloud which Germans ran field-guns up close, the hill swiftly drifted, touching the ground over was finally held, and the enemy fire slackened no-man's-land, towards the French lines. under the British counter battery-work. The The French troops, staring over their cost had been 100 officers and 3000 men out parapets, found themselves clutched by the throat by this gas, which immediately The suspicion that the Germans were attacks the larvnx and lung passages, and using, or were about to use, poison gas, produces temporary or complete asphyxiareceived confirmation almost immediately, tion, very painful in its immediate effects. Their secret had been well kept, but their and very dangerous afterwards. The effect preparations, which had taken the form of on the French-colonial soldiers was dislaving down pipes for the delivery of the astrous. Many were immediately put out fumes of chlorine gas in large volume, had of action and fell gasping for breath: their occupied some time. The chlorine was comrades, seized with explicable terror, fled readily procurable from the chemical fac- from their trenches. Some ran stumblingly tories on the Rhine, where it had been used towards Ypres: others went westwards over in the manufacture of synthetic indigo, and the canal. The Germans, advancing behind where it could be produced cheaply on a their protective gas cloud, merely walked large scale. It was the first of many gases 1 into the abandoned network of first- and with which the Germans experimented, and second-line trenches, eapturing several was in one respect the most successful, thousands of dazed, stupefied, or insensible because its use was almost entirely unex- prisoners, eight batteries of French fieldpected, and its appearance and suffocating guns, and four British 4.7's which had been effects overwhelmed many of the troops it placed in a wood behind the French positions. The two British officers in charge of A recapitulation of the positions held will these guns died, beside them. A gap five make clearer the effects produced by the use miles wide was left in the front lines, and of the gas in stampeding part of the line. for some hours there were no troops between the Germans and Ypres in this sector. For-The number of case employed or tried was between that and forty.



The Ypres Salient before and after the Second Battle of Ypres, 22nd April-13th May

of their blow, stopped to consolidate their Sir John French, one of their communiqués position and did not press on.

ridiculed. But their commanders on the The Germans had not anticipated the spot were sufficiently alive to the possibilities magnitude of their success, and they were of the situation to endeavour by turning not ready to send in cavalry, the prepara- eastwards to roll up the Canadians, whose tions for the use of which, on the part of flank had been left in the air by the sudden French withdrawal. On the exposed flank for three days. Their losses, which infire impinged.

wide and two deep; the canal had been German attack. forced, the Germans were in Lizerne on the On the 25th reinforcements were got

were Royal Highlanders and 48th High- cluded that of their leader, were very heavy; landers (both 3rd Brigade) with the 8th and but their names are inscribed immemoriably 5th Canadians. General Turner, command- on the records of the Second Battle of ing the ard Brigade, extended his men so Ypres. In the afternoon of the 2ard they as to form a defensive flank, and this thin line were joined in their advance by the shaken was furnously assailed by the German fire, but rehabilitated remnants of the French as well as by the relics of the gas. But the Arth Division, and by the Canadians (1st German infantry, advancing to make good and 4th Battalions, 1st Canadian Brigade). the position, were met by a blast of rapid Though a barrier of a kind had thus been fire so effectual that they recoiled; and by formed on the left of the position, the obtuse midnight two reserve battalions, 10th Can- Canadian salient on the right was subjected adjans and Canadian Scottish, sent up to the heaviest hammering, and while on in haste from Ypres, stormed the wood the 23rd of April the situation had been where the lost 4.7's had been installed, and improved it was still critical. On 24th drove the Germans temporarily out of it. April it became clear that this silvanced This diversion confused the Germans, and angle could not be held; and the 3rd Canagave time for the British reinforcements to dian Brigade fell slowly back on to and arrive. The first were the cavalry-de through the village of St. Julien. A de-Liste's 1st Cavalry Division - and the and tachment of Canadians, fighting as long as East Yorks, which served to support the its ammunition lasted, was trapped in French. After them came the 1st Canadian the village. This retirement left the 2nd Brigade, thrown into the gap from Pilkem. Canadian Brigade's flank exposed; but Nearer to the St. Julien wood were the two their commander, by refusing this flank, Canadian battalions which had stormed it, managed to hold his position till reinforceand on their right other six Canadian bat- ments of three battalions, 1st Suffolks, talions on an obtuse front, with a flank bent London Rangers, and 1st Monmouths, under north-west. The most exposed part of this Colonel Wallace (84th Brigade) came up. flank was held by the 13th Royal Canadian They were later joined by the 0th Durhams. Highlanders, on whom the fiercest German and the line was just held. The position on this most critical day has been defined On the morning of the 23rd the position as that of clumps of British holding their was still perilous. The gap was five miles ground against the increasing weight of the

farther side, and on the eastern side ap- up, and behind the screen of a line which, proached Boesinghe. The Canadian 1st reckoning from the right, was in the Brigade was here, however, just in touch following order: 27th and 28th Divisions. with the exhausted French battalions, and, and Canadian Brigade, one battalion ast though the continuity of the line was Canadian Brigade, Wallace's detachment, insecure, it could be strengthened-and and remnants of 3rd Canadian Brigade, was. Battalions from the rest camps were Geddes's detachment, and 17th Brigadehastily thrown in and placed under the General Hull was placed in charge of an command of Colonel Geddes. Geddes's attack. It had not weight enough to get detachment, and Buffs, 3rd Middlesex (part), forward, and its constituents of the 10th 1st York and Lancasters, 5th Royal Lan- Brigade, 1st Royal Irish, and Northumbercasters. 4th Royal Brigade, 2nd Cornwalls, land Territorials, sufficed only to support the oth Royal Scots, and Shropshires (half) other hard-tried battalions in holding it. played the part of an army on that day. Meanwhile another German attack devel-They advanced to plug the gap; and to oped at Broodseinde, five miles away from attack. They could not press the Germans St. Julien, on the front of the 28th Division. back, but they pinned them to their positions It was beaten off, though the flank of the the brunt of the fighting, was at one time in attack. Yet each day that passed, in spite peril. But here, as on the Canadian front, of its hard fighting and losses and its apparent the resistance was sufficient, though at great inconclusiveness, weakened the German cost to the defenders, to hold the Germans back, and by night it became possible to relieve a large portion of the tried Canadian Division by the Lahore Indian Division. At the same time a fresh French Division (152nd, General de Ligne) came up from the south, two others being on their way. The situation was consequently so much brightened that General Smith-Dorrien, in charge of the Second Army, was encouraged to set a counter-attack in motion, in conjunction with the French. The attack extended from Boesinghe to Zonnebeke, and was pushed strongly towards Lizerne. The Indian Division (Jullundur, Ferozepore, and Sirhind Brigades), on the French right, advanced over a mile in face of the German fire and was brought only to a halt by gas. The troops dug themselves in, though hundreds were gassed before the cloud passed over. The French advance also gained ground and was also held up by involved employed seven divisions. gas. Farther east another fine advance by outskirts of St. Julien, but could not hold it. An attack on the 28th Division was beaten off only by hard fighting; and thus it became impossible for any part of the hard-held a success. Every sector had to stand on its own bottom.

The north-east wind, which enabled the Germans still to utilize their gas, held on the 27th. The French made slight progress, especially between Boesinghe and Lizerne, and the Indians (Sirhind Brigade) held their portance could be made: none indeed could be expected, for the action fought by French seline at the point of the baycont, but the guns had already be decembered by the enemy.

85th Brigade, which, with the 84th, bore and British was of the nature of a defensive prospects of success. By the 28th the French had cleared the western side of the canal and on the east had come up to Steenstraate: and the Indian, Canadian, and the rest of the British line was established temporarily too firmly in its position to offer any temptation to the Germans to attack it further. The net result of the five days' fighting had been to bring the Germans two miles nearer to Ypres on a five-mile front, to give the Allies a worse line to hold, and the loss of several thousands of prisoners, besides eight batteries of French field-guns and four British guns of position.1 The Allied casualties altogether were nearly 25,000; the Germans estimated theirs at 16,000, from the two corps, the 26th and 27th, engaged, but they brought up other units, and it is not unlikely that the killed and wounded on either side were very nearly equal in number. In this hardfought battle the British over the whole area

The loss of ground was such that it the Northumberland Brigade reached the became imperative to shorten the line to straighten out the dangerous angle at Zonnebeke, and to bring the eastern line of the greater salient two miles nearer Ypres. On Sunday, and May, a German gas attack on line to give help to any other in exploiting the north of Ypres on the French and the British 12th Brigade (east of St. Julien), and the remains of the 11th and 10th Brigades. and a further attack on 3rd May, emphasized the soundness of Sir John French's decision that it was time for some such readjustment to take place, and on the night of 3rd May, the general retirement was carried out. It own, which was, in fact, as much as could was effected with the greatest skill under be expected. They were supported later in General Plumer. The 4th Division on the the day by another of the scratch detach- north did not retire, but was the hinge on ments from reserves: 2nd Cornwalls, 2nd which the 27th and 28th Divisions swang West Ridings, 5th King's Own, 1st York and back. The 4th Division was greatly helped Lancaster, under Colonel Tuson, the greater by French artillery. The new line just part of which had belonged to the Geddes covered Frezenberg, the Bellewarde Woods, detachment; and late in the evening the and Hooge. But even this line was difficult French Moroccans came forward again to to hold. At that time no effective protection strengthen the line. No advance of im- against gas had been devised, and on 5th

submerged by the chlorine on 1st May with could reckon on easily holding off the French resultant heavy losses, was finally captured and the British at long range by their superior by these means and remained in German weight of metal and machinery. Their liands.

accommodated their artillery to the new situa- relieved by the dismounted 1st and 3rd tion, and began a heavy bombardment of the Cavalry Divisions under General de Lisle. Bellewarde lines on 8th May. The brunt The 1st took the line from Wieltje to Verof it was borne by the 4th Division and the lorenhoek; the 3rd carried it on to Hooge. 28th Division, which joined with the 27th Their appearance in the trenches was greeted Division to continue the line to the 5th by a fourteen-hour German bombardment Division and the south. The bombardment on 12th May, and by an attack which was was of the kind which afterwards, increas- designed to give them no time to settle down, ingly magnified, became the stereotyped The line was temporarily driven in at the preliminary to an attack. The infantry middle, but both flanks were held, and late attack which followed was repulsed with in the day a counter-attack was attempted heavy loss on the front of the 4th Division, with partial success at the dented sector. though it temporarily occupied Wieltje, The 27th Division, also severely bombarded where the 28th Division joined on. At during the day and attacked fiercely by Frezenberg, which was held by the 83rd infantry on the front of the 11th Brigade, Brigade of the 28th Division, the assault, held its ground in face of great difficulties preceded by gas, threw back the defenders and exhaustion, and the end of the day came and left in the air the flank of the 80th with very little loss of ground on the whole Brigade, which belonged to the adjoining front. Next day the German attacks died 27th Division. The Princess Patricia's Cana- down. dians at the junction held their position at The nine-day battle had inflicted on the great cost, with success. Adjoining the 8ard British a loss of some 14,000 men and the Division, on the other side of it, was the three infantry and two cavalry divisions 84th; this also was borne back after losing were worn very thin. The German losses heavily. Counter-attacks were organized in are conjectural, but are probably to be rightly the afternoon at Wieltje and at Frezenberg, estimated at about the same figures, since and these recovered part of the ground none of their infantry attacks, though made which the Germans had cleverly selected for over and over again, got home. The attack, attack. On the oth, 10th, and 11th the however, had been nearly continuous on Germans tested the 8oth and 81st Brigades this front for nearly three weeks, and was (27th Division) which stood on either side broken off because the accumulation of shells of the Menin road, while continuing their had been temporarily exhausted. heavy shelling of the rest of the front.

May Hill 60, which had previously been West. In the West, in short, the Germans attacks, thus aided, had worn so thin the The Germans after their first surprise British line that the 28th Division had to be

After a ten days' lull the Germans attacked

These were the days when the German again on 24th May, sending in advance at superiority in armament and ammunition dawn a poison gas-cloud which drifted down was most severely felt. In Great Britain wind in a bank 3 miles in length and 40 the factories for supplying guns and ammuni- feet in depth. The British forces had by tion in the quantities needed were only then this time been supplied with more or less being built, and American ammunition was effective forms of gas-masks; and the gas no more than a well-advertised myth. Ger- was therefore not so deadly an instrument many, on the other hand was expanding her as it had been. It was followed up with war-material factories, already so ample, every gas-shells and a very heavy bombardment.

day: and, with the aid of the Austrian works The gas-cloud struck the right of the 4th at Skoda, could supply enough shells to over- Division and the whole front of the 28th whelm the Russians on the Eastern Front, Division. The chief impact of the German while easily overweighting the Allies in the attack which followed fell on the 12th and

a way through the salient. The attack, nothing. beginning on 22nd April and lasting till the and killed.

10th Brigades, on the left of the British line. 25th Brigade and other units of the 8th The left and centre of the 12th threw the Ger- Division, ended in a disastrous repulse. The mans back to their trenches; the right was Germans were fully prepared for the attack, borne in. The line was re-formed at night a and their machine-guns swept the brigade quarter of a mile back. The 85th Brigade, back from the position it had seized in the next in order, was assailed as heavily, and first rush. The Indian Corps, advancing here the Buffs and the Fusiliers, having lost on the German lines to the north of Givenehy, nearly all their officers, had to fall back into could make no headway at all. The attack Rellewarde Wood, south of the railway. A of the 1st Division, despite the gallantry and counter-attack was made at night by the heroism with which the 3rd and 2nd Bri-84th Brigade and was pushed home, despite gades in the earlier stages, and the 1st Guards the loss of 75 per cent of the brigade's Brigade, persevered with a hopeless task, effectives. This action, the Battle of Belle- was a failure comparable only to that inflicted warde, was the last occasion on which on the 25th Brigade, and was magnified in chlorine gas was used on a great scale by losses proportionately. There was no misthe Germans. The British lost several take which can be specified in the preparathousands of men killed, wounded, and tions for the attack, and it was pushed with poisoned, but the line remained unaltered; the greatest resolution. The explanation of and on 25th May it was reconsolidated and its failure was that the Germans were prestraightened out, joining the French at the pared for it, their defences were too strong, same point as before, passing through especially in machine-guns, and our artillery Wieltje and the western end of Bellewarde preparation was entirely insufficient. It Lake to Hooge. The French had gained lasted only forty minutes; whereas, later compensation for the slight loss of ground in the war, bombardments of an immensely in all sectors by recapturing Steenstraate and greater weight were continued for days and Het Sas; and the action of Bellewarde, the ended with a "drum fire" of high-exploconcluding stage in the Second Battle of sives lasting for hours. The opening assault Ypres, marked the end of the German of the Richebourg battle was a hard lesson. attempts at this stage of the war to force. It cost over 12,000 casualities and effected

It was imperative that the army should end of May, must have cost the Allies and the not accept such a repulse without attempt to Germans together some 100,000 wounded retrieve it, and a rearrangement of forces was made as a prelude to another attack, the Contemporaneously with the German centre of which was at Richebourg l'Avouc, attacks on the Bellewarde lines the French but the direction farther south in front of were attacking north of Arras; and this offen- Festubert. The 2nd Division replaced the sive went on throughout May. A supporting 1st in the Givenehy sector, and the 7th attack, costly in proportion to the numbers Division (4th Corps) was brought to the disposed of by the British Commander-in-right of the 1st Corps-in the advance Chief, was undertaken by Sir Douglas Haig before midnight of 15th May (this hour being and the First Army in order to prevent the chosen to impart the element of surprise) Germans from sending reinforcements to the Indian Division was placed on the left the Arras front. These operations began on and the 2nd Division on the right. The oth May with an attack along a ten-mile front Indians were held up, but the 2nd Division from Laventie in the north to Richebourg (5th and 6th Brigades, 4th Guards Brigade in the south. Rawlinson's 4th Corps under- in support) gained half a mile of German took the more northerly movement at Rouge- trenches to the depth of a quarter of a mile, banc north-west of Fromelles; the Indian and clung to it. Just before dawn another Corps and the 1st Corps were sent forward attack north of Festubert (20th and 22nd in the southern sector. The northern Brigades, 7th Division) made an opening assault, entrusted to Lowry Cole and the equally successful, and also reached the Germade a strong counter-attack which pushed Keir, next to them and nearer Hooge the back the extreme front of the advance made 5th Army Corps (3rd, 14th, and 46th Terriby the 7th Division, but by the morning of torial Divisions), under General Allenby, the 17th the two advances of the 2nd and the 2nd Army Corps (5th, 28th, and 50th 7th Drussons were fully maintained and Territorial Divisions) under General I'cihad created a small, strongly-held German gusson, and the 3rd Army Corps (Canadian salient, 1000 yards in diameter, between 12th, 27th, and 8th Divisions) under General them This was reduced by hard fighting. Pulteney The First Army under Haig conand by the evening the British advance was sisted of the Indian Corps (General Willcomented and had a width of a miles which cocks) with the vist Highland Territorial was nevertheless very hard to hold, and still Division attached, the 1st Corps and the 7th harder to amplify The effort to do both Division, part of Rawlinson's 4th Corps, 9th, continued for six days longer, the hard- 47th, and 48th Divisions working divisions on which had fallen the military service

In order the forces, in June, 1915, were the to be counted as a victory, though a small 6th Army Corps (4th, 6th, 2nd 40th Terri- one

man second line At night the Germans torial Divisions), commanded by General

The attack on June 16th was preceded on brunt of the action being relieved by the June 15th by a smaller Canadian assault at 51st Highland Territorials and the Cana- Givenchy, which was separate, but fruitless, dians, and afterwards, as desultory, strag- and the same epitaph is to be written of the gling attacks and counter attacks followed advance of the 7th Division and the rist one another, by the 17th London Territorial Highland Territorial Division on the next Dursion The spring campaign, of which day The 7th Division made two advances. the and the Apres battle were the conclud- one by night and one by day, employing ing phases ended with the beginning of single battalions, without achieving any June It will have been observed that the result except losses Of the components of New Armies were beginning to come into the 51st Division, the 154th Brigade made the firing line and in Great Britain itself an advance which was bravely urged but two mo ements were gathering impetus- was foredoomed to failure, because it was the all important expansion in the pro caught by the German shells while the men duction of shells and artillery, and the were waiting to advance. The 6th Scottish mentable progress towards compulsory Rifles and the 4th North Lancashires reached the German trenches and were helped by the For a long period the line, though never 4th Royal Lancesters, but after a series of for a day quiescent, remained little altered, stubborn resistances the ragged line had to though it swayed in rather larger movements fall back. The 8th King's Liverpool tried forward or backward in the neighbourhood to redeem the situation, but, gallantly 25 they of the trenches near Hooge in the most fought, the task was beyond redemption northern sector of the line Engagements The 152nd Brigade was also held up, and took place here on 16th June, 30th July, and the 51st Division lost 1500 men on the day 9th August During this period the armies. More success attended a well planned atwere growing and the line lengthening, tack, north of Hooge, where the German line though slightly. It extended in two armies formed a slight salient, by the ard Division from Boesinghe to 6 miles south of the (8th and 9th Brigade), helped by a sound Betbune-la-Bassee canal The Second Army preliminary bombardment, in which the guns (north) under Sir H Plumer, who had suc- of the French 36th Division supported the cceded Sir H Smith-Dornen, contained British artillery The attack went forward 13 divisions, the First Army-under Sir to the cry of 'Remember the Lustione' D Haig-9 divisions, the approximate and the second line of German trenches was strength of the whole being some 650,000 taken. The losses were heavy, partly bemen, though the bayonet strength was much cause the stormers did not pause at their assigned objectives, but the engagement was

There was now a halt of some three weeks, tension of the British line, which took over German line at the extreme north of the British position where touch was maintained attacked on 30th July the Hooge trenches, attack in Champagne. which had been taken by the British on 16th Division (General Congreve), and was, as and brilliant investigator.) attacks were then counted, very successful.

broken by another dashing little success on a sector on the other side of General Foch 6th July, in which the 11th Brigade (4th and the French Tenth Army before Lens. Division) took and held a section of the This sector extended from south of Arras to north of Albert. Foch and the French Tenth Army were to co-operate with the British with the French Moroccans. As a set-off attack projected for the autumn, and intended against these two successes the Germans to coincide with the much greater French

The British share in the attempt to shake June, and were at this later date held by the the German western line in 1015 was fought 14th Light Infantry Division. This was the in front of Hulluch and Loos, and is confirst of the New Army divisions to be engaged, veniently named the Battle of Loos. For and the salient attacked was held by the 41st four days preceding September 25th, in-Brigade, with the 7th and 8th Rifle Brigade. cessant bombardment was made of the The attack began with a mine explosion, German positions, especially immediately followed by the use of flame-throwers, used south of the La Bassée Canal, and cylinders on the British for the first time. The front for the projected gas attack were got into trenches were lost, and though the right of position. (The use of gas having been forced the brigade held on till night, the line had on the Allies, their investigation of its possito be withdrawn to Sanctuary Wood. Two bilities was thorough, and ultimately the battalions of the 41st Brigade, which had methods originated by British chemists and just been withdrawn, were fetched back, and physicists may be said to have outgassed the two other battalions, from the 42nd and 43rd Germans. Much of the ablest work both in Brigades respectively, were added, and were attack and in anti-asphyxiation devices was sent forward in a counter-attack. It failed, done by Lieutenant-Colonel (Professor) W. but was not entirely unproductive, though Watson, F.R.S., and Lieutenant-Colonel the losses of the 41st Brigade were extremely Baker of the Royal College of Science. The heavy, amounting to 2000 men and 60 officers, first of these, whose health had been under-Desultory fighting went on for some days mined in the course of his investigations, died while a counter-attack on a larger scale was in the London hospital after the Armistice. organized. This was entrusted to the 6th and science was thus robbed of a most valued

The main assault was to be delivered by The 18th Brigade on the right, and the 16th Haig's First Army (1st Corps under Hubert Brigade on the left, carried the German Gough, north, and 4th Corps under Rawlintrenches and the mine crater. The position son, south), from La Bassée Canal in the was well consolidated, and the German in- north to Grenay in the south. The road fantry attacks, which were quickly launched from Vermelles to Hulluch bisected the front to retake the position, were very heavily and determined the sectors of advance of the punished. In this action the British losses respective corps. The bombardment which in the advance were slight owing to very well- paved a way for them had been heavy, managed artillery support, and the German measured by the 1015 standards, though it losses in counter-attack were large. Several was known beforehand that there had been hundreds of German prisoners were taken. many parts of the German defences along During August activity on the Western the 7-mile front which were far from Front was slight. The British were awaiting obliterated by it. This circumstance premen and munitions, and the flow of the judiced the whole action, which was from former was recognizable by the formation of the beginning held up on its left flank, on, a Third Army, under General Monro, con- and south of the La Bassée Canal. The and sisting of the 7th Corps and the 10th Corps. Division (Horne) was employed here: and The formation was accompanied by an ex- of the brigades two (5th and 6th) were north





GENERAL SIR JAMES WILLCOCKS, K.C.B.

From a phongraph by Ellina & Fry



IELD-MARSHAL LORD PLUMER, G.C.B.

From a photograph by Bassans



K.C.M.G.

From a phintegraph by Ranell & Sons



GENERAL SIR WILLIAM R. ROBERTSON G.C.B.

From a photograph by Ellion & Fry

them. The failure, reflecting no discredit rested on the quarries. on the infantry, which was attacking one of outflanking fire on the rest of the advance.

The task and the fate of the 9th Division next to the 2nd in line were not less unfortunate. The 28th Brigade was on the left, the 26th on the right, with the 27th in support. In front of them was the Hohen- such advance as the middle division, the 15th zollern Redoubt, jutting forward from the Scottish (New Army) could effect; while on main German line, and most formidably the right the 47th London Territorial Diviprotected within and without; and behind sion got so well forward as to establish the the redoubt lay the slag heap. Fosse 8. The reputation of the "Cockneys" as fighters. 28th Brigade came to a full stop against the To return to the work of the individual undemolished obstacles in its path. Riddled divisions: both the 1st and 2nd Brigades of with machine-guns, cut down by the flanking the 1st Division found the wire only partially fire from the Auchy batteries, the men died cut, and the 1st Brigade's advance towards Those-a desperate few-who got through it got close to the point assigned to it. The they could do was to re-form to sustain an "Chalk Pit" and Fosse 14, found the Gerexpected counter-attack. The repulse of man trenches in front of it almost undamaged, the 25th Brigade was complete. It was and the progress of the assaulters was conscarcely compensated by the remarkable sequently even slower than that of their success of the 26th Brigade on its right, colleagues of the 1st Brigade. It was not The leading battalions of this brigade, 5th till daylight was failing that the 2nd Brigade wards, and by their speed and decision could come up to support the right. reached Fosse 8. The reserve brigade, 27th (11th and 12th Royal Scots, 6th Scots, 10th left flank of the division next in line (the 12th and 11th Argyle and Sutherland High- Scottish) which was timed to have arrived landers), pressed after them and strengthened at Fosse 14 simultaneously with the 1st, but the position; the field-guns were brought up which arrived there some hours before the quickly and gave them good support.

of the canal, and one (19th) south of it. The trenches in their stride. The left-hand 5th Brigade was not employed in the main brigade established contact with the advance advance, the 6th was held up by wire, and of the 9th Division: the right-hand brigade the same impassable obstacle awaited the (20th) reached the quarries in front of 10th. The troops of these brigades got up Hulloch, taking eight guns. Another small to the wire and could get no farther: the village, Cité St. Elie, north of Hulluch, was most they could do was to hold on, hammered also reached. The advance had not been by German guns, and poisoned by the relies made without loss, and the division, withof our own gas, which eddied back among drawing a little from the brunt of its advance,

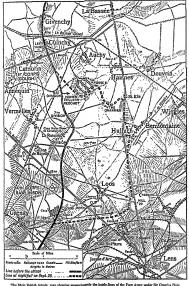
The results of the attack of the 1st Army the strongest positions, left the German Corps north of the Vermelles-Hulluch road artillery at Auchy competent to throw in an thus might be summed up as a repulse on the left, and successes at the centre on the right. The 4th Army Corps attacking south of the road had a similar patchwork of experience. Its 1st Division, on the left, was held up, and this stoppage made insecure while they struggled with the barbed wire. Hulluch was slow and dearly bought, though were killed or had to struggle back. All 2nd Brigade, which was to have reached the Camerons, led by Lochiel, 7th Seaforths, could join the 1st in an advance on the Lensfollowed by 8th Gordons, and the Black Hulluch road (which ran roughly parallel to Watch, went on like a pack of football for- the front of the attack) and the ard Brigade

The delay in this advance had exposed the others. The 46th Brigade was the most The 7th Division on the right wing of exposed. It had made a very fine advance, Gough's 1st Army Corps did as well as the taking Fosse 14 in its stride, and eventually oth Division. Its leading brigades (22nd streaming up the long slope of Hill 70. The on the left and 20th on the right) went for- 45th supporting Brigade came after them. ward with the greatest precision, and, adding On the right of these the 44th Brigade, dash to coolness, took the first line of German moving divergently, had dashed forward as far as Loos, where in the main street they posed to the damaging fire of the guns of met the Londoners of the 47th Division, and threw out their left fanwise towards Hill 70, to give a hand to the battered troops of the 46th Brigade clinging to the slope. The line might possibly, by digging itself in at once, have held the advanced position, but a number were lost by pushing forward mistakenly too far down the reverse slope, and the end of the day found the line of Scots fallen back from their first holding to a position farther back, which they maintained at a high cost, in spite of the reinforcements of other Scottish regiments sent up.

On the right, the Londoners, consolidated for the first time in a divisional operation, had greatly distinguished themselves. On the left the 141st Brigade (18th London Irish and 20th Blackheath) went off with a rush, typified by the regimental football with which its handicap, did very well in helping the the London Irish kicked off, and, going Scots near Fosse 8, and all day long the old straight through the three German lines of troops and the new clung to this point and trenches, reached the south end of Loos, held the place against intermittent German There they were joined, as already stated; by counter-attacks. Close to Fosse 8 the the Scots of the 44th Brigade, and the two Quarries, the temporary holding of the 7th threw out or captured the 23rd Silesians, Division, were lost and could not be retaken. who held the town. The 140th Brigade had All along this northern sector the gains of been equally businesslike, and had seized the the first onrush were being whittled away. Double Crassier-twin slag heaps which had On the southern front the same process was been converted into a redoubt. The ground going on, though not over all its length. The south of Loos was rapidly seized and con- 15th Scottish still clung to the slopes of Hill solidated by the Londoners, who had the 70, but were always slipping down, each man 142nd Brigade in their second line. The fighting his own stubborn battle; for, once situation thus outlined may be now examined again, there was no sufficient artillery supas a whole. The German line had been port. In these unpropitious surroundings eaten into, but nowhere pierced, though at the advance ordered for the 1st, 24th, and some points only one line of entrenchments part of the 21st Division went forward. The lay between the attackers and the open advance was misconceived: it was made country to the east. But in that one line were under misapprehensions. The first of them entrenched men to whom supports could be, was that Hulluch was in British hands, which and were being, rapidly hurried up, and in was not the case. The second was that the shelter of which counter-attacks could be General Mitford, commanding the 24th organized. The newly won, imperfectly con- Division (72nd Brigade and part of the 71st solidated British line was very vulnerable to Brigade) believed that the 1st Division was such attacks. It was strong only at the advancing simultaneously on his left, whereas extreme right of Loos. The 15th Division in fact, the advance of the 1st Division was immediately north of that had to fall back delayed. The 72nd Brigade, 71st in support from Hill 70 to the line of the Lens-La Bassée (24th Division) advancing very well, found road. The 7th and 9th Divisions still held, themselves enfiladed by the unsilenced but precariously, the western outskirts of German machine-guns in Hulluch. They Hulluch, the edge of St. Elic, the quarries, went on, nevertheless, after a fruitless and Fosse 8; but on the extreme left were ex- attempt to stop the German machine-run

Auchy. It will be perceived from the foregoing recital that the troops, by nightfall, had all, or most, fallen back from the extremity of their gains: and all had lost heavily in holding on to what they had won. The struggle was hardest on the left, in the neighbourhood of Fosse 8.

Two divisions, untried heretofore, the 21st and 24th, were brought up in support, and, except the 73rd Brigade, were distributed in the advance trenches to co-operate with the 1st Division in making a united assault past Hulluch. (The 73rd Brigade was sent up to reinforce the oth Division at Fosse 8.) The new divisions arrived cold, tired, and hungry, and in common with the other troops spent a night of pouring rain waiting in the trenches. The 73rd Brigade, despite



The Main British Attack; map showing approximately the battle-lines of the Farst Army under Sir Douglas Haig at drybresh and at pightfall on 25th September, 1915

across the Lens-Hulluch road till they came the remains of the worn 26th, and, following right up against the German wire. They it up with a strong infantry attack, captured tried in vain to get through; they were that key position. Till midday the situation thrown back, and their losses in retirement was dark indeed. Then the Guards Division were added to those in the advance. The (the Earl of Cavan) was sent forward, best commentary on the mistaken character operating on roughly the same line as the of the effort they were called on to make, and 21st Division. The 1st Brigade was in touch the mistakes in staff work which permitted with the 7th Division, the 2nd Brigade in it, is that the 72nd Brigade lost 78 officers the centre, the 3rd Brigade extending to and 2000 men out of the 3600 with which it Loos. The division had in front of it Chalk set out.

be recited only in fragments, because the from the unsuccessful attack of the 21st and division was broken up before going into 24th Divisions came back through the action. The 62nd Brigade was taken away Guards' lines, and in the afternoon the to reinforce the 15th Scottish Division south- bombardment of the German posts facing east of Loos, and to maintain contact with them was renewed. the 47th (London Territorial) Division, and

was made, by bringing up the Guards and -an almost unprecedented proportion. 28th Divisions, to improve the situation. But the exhausting Sunday was followed by for it was not possible to break off the action a black Monday morning, for quite early the at any chosen moment. But General Foch,

fire for themselves, and pushed forward Fosse 8, held by the new 73rd Brigade and Pit Wood, Fosse 14, and Hill 70. During The movements of the 21st Division can the night of the 26th-27th many stragglers

The 2nd Brigade had the 2nd Irish as its this task was accomplished with great credit. spearhead, with the 1st Coldstream in sup-The main attack of the other part of the port, and advancing at four o'clock made division, consisting of the 63rd and 64th good Chalk Pit Wood in front of it. On its Brigades was made against a considerable right the 1st Scots passed through a heavy line of obstacles, the Chalk Pit on one side of fire to carry Fosse 14 by storm. This they the Lens-Hulluch road, and the Fosse 14 did, carrying some of the Irish Guards with and the Bois Hugo, a large plantation which them; but pushing forward two impetuously was a machine-gun nest, on the other. The were caught in a heavy German counterbrigades had scarcely set out on their advance attack, borne back, and lost the position they before they became involved in what was had won. A renewed attack failed, and probably a simultaneous counter-attack by Chalk Pit Wood was in danger of being lost. the Germans. The result was that the It was, however, held all night against a very attack was thrown back, and the assaulting heavy and accurate bombardment, and was brigade, the supports (64th Brigade), and not again ceded. The 3rd Brigade, meanthe Divisional artillery suffered severely, while, advancing at the same time as the (The losses of the two supporting divisions 2nd, had made the summit of Hill 70. Welsh were together 8000.) Moreover, their re- Guards and Grenadiers leading, but the pulse, so far from turning the tide of battle troops could not hold it in face of the German in our favour, compelled the withdrawal of fire, and so sank behind the summit and dug the men of the Scottish Division from Hill 70. themselves in. Chalk Pit Wood and the Fortunately the right flank of the British slope of Hill 70 marked the line henceline held firm, and formed a very useful forward, and the Guards Division had paid corner-stone on which to rally and re- 3000 casualties to draw it. They continued organize. The 47th Division had broadened to hold the line till the end of the month, and strengthened its hold in the environs of when two brigades (35th and 36th) of the Loos; and though this was an insufficient 12th Division temporarily relieved them. set-off against the mile of the Lens-Hulluch- The 15th Division (Scottish) had also been La Bassée road that had been lost, an attempt withdrawn, having suffered 6000 casualties

The end of the Battle of Loos was not yet, Germans began a heavy bombardment of at Sir John French's request, sent the French defence of Loos on the 28th, and the units a more concerted German counter-attack. of the British line were rearranged. The The expectations were fulfilled: and on 8th 28th Division had come up after the Guards, October the positions of assaulter and deand had been designed to restore the balance fender were reversed. The German attack on the left while the Guards operated on the was made along the whole front of the right. General Bulfin, who commanded, British gains from the Hohenzollern Redoubt and who took over the command of the oth to Loos, which the French held for us, and Division as well, owing to the death of involved, from left to right, the 7th, the General Thesiser-killed by a shell just Guards, the 12th, the 1st Division, and the before the German counter-attack on Fosse 8 French 9th Corps. A specially fierce attack on the 27th-found that his supports were was made against the trench held by the urgently required. Fosse 8 had been lost, Guards and running from the Hohenzollern the hold on the Hohenzollern Redoubt im- Redoubt, known as "Big Willie". The perilled in consequence, and the Quarries Germans bombed their way in only to be wrested from the 7th Division. The 85th bombed out again. Another principal point Brigade was sent forward to the succour of of assault was the Chalk Pit, which, together the 26th and 73rd Brigades huddled on the with its neighbourhood, was held by the edge of the big redoubt, and restored that 1st Division. Here the Germans, debouchposition, pushing the Germans back through ing from the Bois Hugo, suffered very the support trench, known as "Little heavily, and they lost in equally great num-Willie', leading northwards. An attack bers in their attack on the French, whose was organized on Fosse 8 (on the morning of 75's lived up to their reputation. The the 28th; the 8-th Brigade came into action German counter-attack of the 8th October on the 27th), but it could not be taken from failed in every sector, and must have been the Germans, for though the summit was extremely costly. reached, it was swept continually by their

YOL VI.

only temporary.

oth Corps, Tenth Army, to take over the stiffening of the line was in anticipation of

The greater part of the Hohenzollern fire. It had to be resigned to them, and the Redoubt, which had for a space been British, 28th Division had to accept the humbler but was, however, again in German hands, and necessary task of preventing further loss of on the 13th an attempt was made to take ground. On 1st October, they tried to make it from them once more. The assault was stronger their hold on the Hohenzollern entrusted to the 46th North Midland Terri-Redoubt by clearing more decisively the torial Division, which was brought up from "Little Willie" trench; but the gain was reserve; and associated with this attack were others west of Hulluch (1st Division) and at The action was now dying down, but on the Quarries (12th Division). The attack 3rd October flared up again at the instance on the Hohenzollern Redoubt was a high of the Germans, who forced their way back trial for troops not yet experienced in into the greater part of the Hohenzollern divisional assault, and their task was made Redoubt, aided by their machine-guns at severer by inadequate artillery preparation. Fosse 8, and the artillery position at Auchy, It was a task too heavy on the right, where whose undisturbed possession had so un- the attack was held in front of the eastwarddermined the whole of the British success. running "Big Willie" trench; but on the A strong attack on the other sector of the left, where the puns made more impression, 28th Division, between the quarries and the Leicesters and Lincolns swarmed over the bisecting road, was repelled. On 4th and whole of the redoubt up to Fosse Trench. 5th October the Guards Division, after its Thereafter the attack resolved itself into a very brief period of rest, was brought up to bombing encounter, in which the Midlanders relieve the 28th Division, and at the same got into both the communication trenches, time the 1st Division relieved the 12th "Big" and "Little Willie". In the end, Division on the immediate right of the new after forty-eight hours of assault, of holding positions assigned to the Guards. This on, of bombing and counter-bombing attacks, side of the redoubt and the British line large proportion were of course only temestablished there.

For their success, which was of moral rather than great material value while Fosse 8 remained in enemy hands, the Midland Division paid 4000 casualties. The set-off by the 2nd Division astride the La Bassée against this cost was not the ground, but the Canal, by the 58th Brigade, 19th Division, hard experience which was grinding the battalions of the New Army into veterans; and was incidentally proving to the soldiers, from private to Commander-in-Chief, the Division was engaged in similar operations ability of the Germans in fighting tactics in the neighbourhood of the Bois Grenier. -especially of the offensive-defensive kind. In all these movements a small advance was There was no breezy optimism at the front, made, and was then relinquished under the though high courage and determination were pressure of the German counter-attacks. never lacking there. On the same day that The same may be said of a larger-scale the Midland Division bought its experience, demonstration in force set in motion by the the 12th Division and the 1st Division had 5th Corps (now under General Allenby) been sent forward. The 12th Division was over the old ground of Bellewarde and the called on for a strong demonstration: the Menin road. It was an operation which 1st Division broke into the German trenches served its purpose, as the others did, of over a 1000-yards front, but could not hold detaining bodies of German troops, but it them. This practically brought to an end was, also like the other attacks, from that of the Battle of Loos, except for a brisk little the 5th Brigade at the La Bassée Canal to attack on the Hohenzollern Redoubt on 20th the 14th Division at Ypres, costly of lives. October. The net result was a gain of 7000 and fruitful only in bloody experience. That vards of front to an average depth of 2 summary might fitly apply to a great part of miles. Some 3000 German prisoners were the work which fell on the growing British taken, including 57 officers; and 26 guns. armies in the West, during a year which was The British lost by German counter-attacks one of a saddening realization of the imforces in the three weeks of fighting, which Britain in resuming her ancient position as began on 25th September, were not fewer the Keeper of the Balance of Power in than 50,000 men and 2000 officers per- Europe.

the Germans were driven from the western manently or temporarily out of action. A porarily lost; but the number of killed was

Subsidiary actions, the losses of which are included, were fought on 25th September north of Givenchy; by the Indians at Neuve Chapelle, and by their neighbours, the 60th Brigade of the 20th Division, The 8th 1000 prisoners, and the losses to the British mensity of the task that lay before Great

CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH FRONT IN 1915

In bending the German line at any of its interval, and by armies at least as capable sectors the British army, when regard is had and well-found as those which Germany for its size and inexperience, and its shortsge could put into the field. Germany had been of machinery, accomplished in 1915 a con- beaten at the Marne by her own breathless siderable feat. The Germans opened the effort, as well as by an adversary who struck war with a tremendous start of their ad- her at the exact moment when she was versaries in preparedness, and it should have winded; and she did not at once recover her been obvious from the beginning that this balance even when sunk in the well-chosen start could only be reduced after a long defences of the Aisne. But as month after which might have disturbed her while she Ypres, and which consisted of Landwehr, trenched feet throughout the months of 1915, not been a great success. She now began, to whether the blow was levelled by the British, use a French phrase, to ménager les hommes, artillery and yet beat them.

war will show that every advance, abortive ception of the strong artillery regiments with or productive, which either side made, was which each division was equipped. These hased on a superiority, either temporary or assaulting divisions were distributed along permanent, of shells, as well as of rifles. the line. The gaps created in the first-line This applied even to the Battle of the Marne, corps were filled with the less capable troops. where the Germans had temporarily lost. Moreover, she began the method, which could spare, to smash the Russian front.

of men she still had great forces in the West: advance over neighbouring sectors. Those which Germany had, she reorganized the attack. This was perceived, if all

month went by, her defences, clastic and and redistributed. The new formations inelastic, became ever stronger, and thrusts which she had sent into the first battle of was staggering, left her firm upon her en- Landsturm, and under-aged recruits, had who were learning warfare on the large scale, and to form divisions of which the three or by the French, who could not give to the infantry regiments were first-line trained Germans their great handieap in shells and troops-afterwards, under the war's modifications, becoming "shock troops "-and A careful examination of the phases of the the others divisional troops, with the ex-

their great superiority. The Germans, who temporarily misled many military writers were the most practised theorists in large- as to the depletion of her resources in men, scale warfare, judged quickly and rightly of drawing in advance the coming-on classes that their great advantage in armament of future years and incorporating them. would be sufficient to hold off any Franco- By these means she put in the west a number British offensive in the West in 1915. By of assaulting divisions which could be called the end of the year they had confirmed on in emergency, and a number of corps in the rightness of their judgment, and the training, with which, stiffened with better French and British commanders had become material and very strongly supported by converts to it, if indeed they had needed artillery, she could reckon on holding a conversion. But whatever the belief of defensive front. In a sense Germany was the Allied Chiefs on the vulnerability gambling on this defensive system; but the of the German line, it was impossible that event proved her right. She owed much they should leave it untested, and the need of her ability in defence to an equally sound for attacking it became imperative when the appreciation of the use of machine-gun Germans, carrying to a logical issue the tactics. In the recital of the British attempts second part of their theory, massed their to force a portion of the German line, the forces, and as much of their artillery as they occurrence of the holding up of an advance ould spare, to smash the Russian front. by some small or isolated group of German
While Great Britain was still rather slowly defences, always abundantly supplied with getting to work on munition factories, and machine-guns, has been noted. These France, a little more swiftly, was enlarging occurrences were typical of the defensive those she had, and expediting their output, warfare along the whole of the German line Germany was already setting in motion that whenever it was attacked either by British mobilization of her whole people on war or French. The preliminary bombardment work which the other belligerents adopted might erase wide stretches of defences, but later. She was more ready; she had greater if any were left unswept, they formed themreserves to begin with; she began to heap up selves at once into nuclei of resistance which new supplies at a far greater rate. In respect counterbalanced, or rendered useless, the

too great for France to undertake too many
The sole antidote was to outgun the Gerrisks in breaking her line, for the French mans, and so to overwhelm the defences army in 1915 was, to the Allies' land forces, that no yard of them should go unsearched what the British fleet was to their navies. before the infantry was sent forward to Castelnau was in no very good position be-From Berry-au-Bac the whole line of the Aisne eastward was German, and south of reverse in January. it nearly all Champagne north of the Rheims-St. Menehoud-Verdun railway. Behind this area a good railway served them; in front of it only the entrenchd army of Langle-de-Cary, Verdun, barred an advance. The southern Argonne and Verdun were well held and fortified; and the only other danger-point was at St. Mihiel. Beyond that the defences in the hands of General Dubail were sound. were therefore along the north-western part, and retake Lille.

Dame de Lorette, running west and east dient, and Maunoury's task in withdrawing

the implications were not understood, in and south of the ridge, are the townlets of France, where the preparations went on Souchez, Carency, La Targette. From steadily throughout the winter, and where Carency to La Targette were the "White Ioffre's nibbling policy was pursued without Works" entrenchments, continued southimpatience, and without any modification wards and eastwards in "The Labyrinth". other than that of strengthening the line This region was in 1915 the field of some or attempting to improve it in places. De- of the bloodiest fighting of the war. The snite the German defeat on the Marne, and plateau could be turned from the north, their repulse in Flanders, the Germans had if the French could penetrate between it a line well suited to take the offensive, and the La Bassée ridges, and attempts were Dixmude was theirs, and so was the eastern made, through December to February, north, edge of the ridge that was the key to the west, and south of the plateau by General position north of the Lys. The heights at de Maud'huy, and subsequently by his suc-La Bassée, and those from Notre Dame de cessor, General d'Urbal, to find the chink Lorette, north-west of Lens to Arras; other in the German armour. From Arras to heights from the south of Arras, east of the Somme a number of minor combats had Albert, to the Somme; and both banks of the taken place in the same period. In the plain upper Somme were held by them. De between the Somme and the Oise, De Castelnau had steadily improved the defences in tween the Somme and the Oise; and since the early part of the year. Next in section. the Battle of the Aisne the French had made Compiègne to Berry-au-Bac, affairs had not little progress on the north bank of that gone so profitably for the French, and the river from Compiègne to Berry-au-Bac, army of Maunoury at its centre, in the neighbourhood of Soissons, suffered a serious

Since September, 1914, Maunoury and Franchet d'Esperey had been endeavouring to detach the Germans from the formidable positions they occupied on the heights of connecting with that of Sarrail defending the Aisne between Soissons and Berry-au-Bac, and on 8th and 9th January an attack was made on two important spurs near the villages of Cuffies and Crouy. The French troops entrenched north of the river maintained their supplies chiefly by bridges over The vulnerable points in the French line the Aisne at Missy and Venizel, opposite Bucy. The attack was delivered in torrential which could be divided into three sectors, rain, which swelled the river and carried from Le Bassée to Arras, from Arras to the away the bridges. Von Kluck, in command Somme, and from the Somme to the junc- of the German troops, seized his opportion of the Aisne and the Oise at Compiègne, tunity, and counter-attacked the compara-In the first of these the French Higher Com- tively weak French forces north of the river mand aimed at driving the Germans from with troops amounting to more than an army the edge of the plain of the Scheldt, and, corps. On the morning of 12th January having recovered Lens, to cut off the La masses of men were sent forward to over-Bassée salient with the help of the British whelm the French right above Crouv and their holding on one of the spurs. The The Germans were established on the French endeavoured to cover their retreat difficult plateau between the Lys and the across the river by a renewed attack on the Scarpe. On the northern edge of the other spur. But the manœuvre was too plateau in the commanding ridge of Notre desperate to be more than a temporary expe-



SPRAYING LIQUID FIRE WITH A "FLAMMENWERFER"

One of the dreadful weapons of destruction used by the Germans



at Venizel, became a very difficult one. On Argonne, south of Varennes, in the region the night of the 14th the retreat from the of Vauquois, the line of General Sarrail's whole of the River Crouy to Missy, adjacent defences curved north and north-eastwards to Soissons, except for a bridge-head at St. across the Meuse towards the defences of Paul, was effected; but the reverse, which Verdun, the perimeter of which the French cost the French 5000 casualties, was not to steadily bent themselves to enlarge. General be denied. The Germans were said by Sarrail's dispositions were such that at the the French to have lost a greater number of beginning of 1915 the point of the German men in effecting their purpose.

side made any progress, and the attempt of Orne-two conical heights where the heavy the Germans to advance from the Moron- German guns were subsequently installed, villiers massif down the valley of the Suippe about 10 miles from the town, and 4 miles was held in check by Franchet d'Espercy and Foch. The Germans had to content themselves with the senseless and unmilitary bombardment of Rheims and its cathedral. The damage to the cathedral was considerable, because of the vulnerability and fragility of this great example of the best period of French Gothic; and nothing could

sensibility. to Langle de Cary was you Einem, with an the Chasseurs-Alpins on 24th March, 1015. army of about the same size. The chief tion facing the German trenches from extending their front along the western cated, left these positions more or less counter-attack and a furious bombardment

his troops by the one bridge left standing, stabilized. From the eastern edge of the lines nearest to Verdun, into which no shell From Berry-su-Bac to Rheims neither had been thrown, were the twin hills of from Dousumont Fort

In the German advance the French fortified lines from Verdun to Toul had been pierced at St. Mihiel, but Sarrail, with two cavalry corps, had confined them just in time to the salient Les-Eparges-St. Mihiel-Bois - le - Prêtre. The Germans, however, had secured a considerable stretch of the have been more exasperating to French heights of the Meuse from Les Eparges to St. Mihiel. In January, 1915, the French It was, nevertheless, in the country be- ficrcely attacked the German holding and tween Rheims and Verdun that the greatest secured most of the Bois-le-Prêtre, which activity was shown during the winter and is just north and west of Pont-à-Mousson the early spring, because here the French on the Moselle. From Pont-à-Mousson line was most exposed to an attack in mass: the French line went east of Nancy, which and Generals Langle de Cary and Sarrail was out of reach of German artillery, and were entrusted with the task of preparing in the winter advanced within a few miles of the way for a French advance which would St. Donon, the culminating peak of the deprive the Germans of suitable jumping- northern Vosges. The operations in the off places. General Langle de Carv's aim Vosges also went in favour of the French. was to reach, or put out of action, the though a fierce struggle continued almost Bazancourt-Grand Pré railway which ran day by day for the peak north of Cernay parallel to and behind the German front, named the Hartmannsweilerkoof. The crossing the Argonne forest and terminating summit, several times taken and retaken. at Apremont north of Varennes. Opposite was in French hands after a severe fight by

The most sanguinary fighting in the early advance by the French was towards Perthes, part of the year took place on the western and Prunay. Farther east, in the Argonne. side of the St. Mihiel salient for the Meuse the French had eventually taken up a posi- heights of Les Eparges on the eastern side of the river. The line of hills, of which Les Venne - le - Château to Melzicourt, finally Eparges was the buttress, formed the northern defences of the position behind St. Mihiel. border of the forest. Their lines ultimately By February 17th the French had sapped faced the western and eastern entrances into towards the German positions and, blowing the Argonne; and the warfare of trenches up their trenches, rushed the first two lines. in the forest fighting, excessively compli- On 18th February there was a Bavarian to follow. Not till the 22nd could the French their line kept the Germans from ever declaim any success. Another attempt was veloping any opportunity presented to them made a week later, and the net results of the of counter-attacking either British or French fighting appeared to be a slight gain of ground disastrously. But in 1915 it was not fully by the French, with severe losses on both sides. Similar fighting, with not dissimilar results, took place west of Verdun, and in the Argonne, during these months.

It was west of the Argonne, between the Aisne and the Suippe, that the most important of the French battles in the early part of 1915 were fought. Von Einem's forces, deployed west and south of the Argonne to Berry-au-Bac, were a continuous threat to Ioffre's whole western position. It was, moreover, becoming evident that in pursuance of the theory of co-operative action on all fronts the Allics in the west must pay back their debt to the Ally in the east by that the French had obtained a command of detaining as many German troops as they could. Accordingly, General Langle de Cary began a series of attacks on General von Einem in the region of Perthes, at very much the same time that Great Britain, also at Russia's instance, took the first steps towards the Dardanelles Expedition.

bored their way forward on the line Perthesle Mesnil-Massiges; and in the following January there had been the customary interchange of yards of trenches in this area. On 16th February a new French attack began, which, in its initial stage, captured two miles of trenches north of Beausejour. This fighting, though never developing into a battle. and always remaining local in character, went on with intermissions till 12th Marchnearly a month. Such success as was gained was indubitably French, and in terms of territory represented an advance of 13 miles strategy possible in 1915 to the Allies.

The battle of Perthes was said, in 1915, preoccupation of General Joffre. to have helped the British to win Neuve Chapelle; though it would be truer to say in the Lille-La Bassée-Arras triangle formed

realized by either of the Allies that a successful break of the German lines was an improbability. They believed (as Sir John French hoped) that Lens, and with it the plain between the Scarpe, Scheldt, and Lys, might be won. The preliminary steps to its recovery were the seizure of the plateau between Notre Dame de Lorette and Vimv. and the piercing of the German line between the heights of Notre Dame de Lorette and of La Bassée. The Germans were not blind to the French designs, and during February and March counter-attack followed attack : in this sector. It was not till 23rd March the Notre Dame de Lorette Ridge, and even then the command was disputed. At the end of this narrative of events on the French front during the prolonged winter of 1914-15 the French line was in an excellent state of defence, and, provided that the men and gunpower were forthcoming, was not ill placed During December, 1914, the French had for attack. But it should have been evident that the high cost at which every small advance had been won made a large success precarious.

An illustration was furnished, before the Allied attack in Artois opened, by the cost of the last attack on Les Eparges, which, beginning on 5th April, lasted five days before the great spur, dominating the Woëvre, was irrevocably in French hands. The Germans had to cede this strong point, but their machine-gunners were chained to their weapons, a fact which, however interpreted, was a token of the enemy's resistance. The over a 4-mile front. Tactically the French capture of Les Eparges seemed to presage position was improved; strategically four a further attempt to squeeze out the St. to five German army corps had been de- Mihiel salient, and possibly to pave the way tained, and though it is not likely that their to a blow on the German left in Lorraine detention greatly affected the German plans and Alsace. If such a policy was ever enteron the Russian front, this species of offensive- tained by the French General Staff it was defensive warfare was, in fact, the only abandoned by the beginning of May, when the campaign of Artois became the chief

At the beginning of May the German lines that the French persistency in attack all along a sharp salient. They extended east of Loos, across the Lens-Béthune road, east of Aix-Noulette, and reached the Lorette plateau, well to the west of the highest spur crowned by the chapel. They covered Ablain, which was the extreme point of the salient, and Carency. They then curved sharply back east of the Bois de Berthenval, covering La Targette and the road from Arras to Béthune. Here were the White Works, and the village of Ecurie was also made part of the German lines, which were here drawn to protect Lens. During the first week of May the French Tenth Anny, under General d'Urbal, with General Foch in superintendence, was brought up in strength to 7 corps, and its artillery was increased to 1100 gunsin those days an unprecedented accumulation. It was necessary, and in fact less than adequate to its purpose, for the German intricate system of trenches was so linked by the small machine-gunned forts that pulverization of any great length of them was almost impracticable. The French bombardment began on 9th May. and in the course of a few hours had spent more than a quarter of a million shells. About ten o'clock the infantry advanced on to the field of their artillery preparation, and took what remained of the road junction of La Targette. East of it, in the hollow below the Vimy heights, lies Neuville St. Vaast, the church of which had been converted into a fortress. The French had to fight through the village house by house. Farther north the centre of d'Urbal's attack swent over the White-Works and beyond the road from Béthune to Arras. The right and centre had gone on for more than 2 miles. But, as so often happened, another part of the line, the left, was held up. At Carency the endless ravines and hollows had all to be fought for: and, though the day brought 3000 prisoners and 10 guns, the battle was only beginning.

On the next two days the French carried all the entrenchments across the Loos-Bethune road. They attacked the chapel of Notro Dame de Lorette, and carried the greater part of Carcney and most of what was left of Neuville St. Vasast, between the



Map to illustrate the French Effort west of Len March-May, 1915

French hands. It had been a tremendous attack. it on the last day of the month.

successive engagements showed that it must the bombardment was intensified. be seconded by superiority in numbers. In

White Works and the Labvrinth entrench- 1915 the Allies on the Western Front did ments. On the 12th, after a most des- not possess the requisite superiority in either perate struggle, the chapel fell to them; of these factors, and the German line, for-Ablain and the remnants of Germans in tified in the new manner by machine-gun Carency surrendered. The whole of the strongholds, scientifically placed, sufficed high ground west of Souchez, with the always to slow down an assault on it till reinexception of a few fortified posts, was in forcements could be gathered for counter-

feat; and, if war was merely a theory, a During the summer the front remained great triumph, for the German line ap- undisturbed by any large movements, though peared to be pierced. It was, in fact, not it was never quiescent, and the strain of pierced, because in it were a number of local attacks, offensive and defensive, was untaken fortified posts, which as effectually continuous and exacting. How trying the prevented a wave of advance pouring onward strain was is known to the British people, as a number of stones on a lawn would but, as Sir Douelas Haig acknowledged four impede the progress of a lawn-mower; the years later, in his speech at the presentation Sugar Refinery at Souchez, the cemetery at of the freedom of the City of London to Ablain, a road on one of the Lorette spurs, Marshal Foch, the greater part of the strain the eastern outskirts of Neuville St. Vaast, by far fell on the French, who at all times and especially the Labyrinth between that and in all seasons saw their man-nower drain village and Ecurie. All these places were ing away. Great Britain was preparing, and studded with machine-gun nests manned despite all urgency could not prepare faster by brave and skilful gunners: and the battle than a given rate either in men or shells. In was resolved into a number of small actions shells, in 1915, the French output was far against them. On 21st May the road on larger than the British, and the lessons of the Lorette Spur fell, but Ablain cemetery Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, and Artois, had held out for eight days longer; and the enforced the necessity of laying up the Souchez refinery changed hands several highest possible accumulation for an offentimes before the French made certain of sive. There was some reason for continuing this process of accumulation-of the British With that episode the Battle of Artois resources as well as of the French-through came to an end It had flattened out the 1015 and beyond it; but the Russian collapse German salient, and left Lens with only its on the Galician and Polish fronts had renown defences. But, despite its capture of dered delay a double-edged weapon, seeing important positions, as well as some coop to that in the following spring Germany might 6000 prisoners, it had left the general situa- be freer to handle the Western front, and tion unchanged, and the Germans little could scarcely be weaker than in the autumn worse for the encounter. The German of 1915. General Joffre, in pursuance of losses in this battle, as in that of Festubert, the military doctrine of striking an enemy where the British subsidiary attack had when he is exhausted by his own efforts, taken place, had been severe; but so had therefore determined on a blow on a large those of the Allies, and, after those battles, scale in late September. Before the date as before them, the Germans retained the of the assault, attacks at many points of the superiority in the decisive factor of such front had been made to confuse the enemy's forms of warfare, namely high-explosive judgment as to the exact point at which the shells. The French artillery had shown heaviest blow would fall; and in various what could be done with an adequate artil- sectors, such as those of the Souchez district lery preparation, but "adequate" prepara- in Artois, Arras, the Aisne, in Champagne tion was not enough. For results it must east of Rheims, in front of the Moronvillers be overwhelming, and, as the war went on, position, in the Argonne, and the Woëvre,

The sector of assault actually selected was

that which marked the French centre in third zone, with the Souain Ridge, Heights Champagne, from Auberive, on the River 105 and 201, and the Tahure Ridge. Suippe, through Sousin and Perthes to Massiges, a 16-mile front in a rolling country strongly protected by two hills to the west of chalk downs and slow streams. The and the Mesnil Ridge to the east, and artigoverning idea of making the attack on a ficially strengthened between these butwide front was a sound one, for any break tresses. through over a narrow front could never be rapid enough to enable the troops effecting it to turn round and roll up the enemy flank. Mackensen's suecessful drive in Galicia had been made on a 30- to 40-mile front; the the heights of 191 and 199, together ealled

North of Mesnil was the fourth zone,

The fifth zone, north of Beauséjour, opened up fairly easy country which rose to the Maisons de Champagne Farm,

Beyond it was the zone of Massiges, where



zones for assault,

Somme-Py (north).

North of Perthes was the valley of the one in support behind it had been eriss-

difficulties in the way of the French were the Main de Massiges, formed the strongest incomparably greater, but they believed that buttress of the whole sector. Every vard their artillery concentration and skill would of the six zones had been fortified, and cusurmount them. The German front attacked trenched, and machine-gunned to the highest was by no means uniform in character, and known point of effectiveness. It was noit was divided by the French Staff into six where a single, double, or treble line of trenches merely, but a double line of main The first zone extended from Auberive positions, a very different thing. The second eastwards to Ville sur Tourbe, over a 5-mile main position lay 2 to 21 miles behind the ridge, bisected by the road from St. Hilare first; and the first-line defences were ex-(south) to St. Souplet. The fortifications tremely dense, consisting of a network some of d'Epine de Vedegrange were on this road. quarter of a mile in depth of entrenchments, The hollow of Souain was the next zone, sometimes of five trenches in parallel lines, with a road from the village through the with large fields of barbed-wire entanglestrong point of Navarin Farm on the hill to ments placed in between. The 2 miles separating the first main positions from the and studded with the new-fashioned fortins, advance, had now targets of known ranges or machine-gun forts and emplacements- on which to operate. So that, instead of becoming later the concrete pill boxes.

The antidotes to this elaboration of defences were the high-explosive shell and aircraft observation. The Germans had begun the war with a great preponderance of aeroplanes, mostly of one type. The French and British were rapidly catching up in numbers, and were evolving tactics suited Epine de Vedegrange to Souplet. The to fighting, observation, and bombing- German line was here indented with bays machines. These aided in some degree the and salients like a fortress, so that inside a concealment of French intentions by keep- bay the attackers were machine-gunned from ing German aeroplanes at a distance, but in three sides; and to the machine-gunning a greater degree, by observation, charted out was added the accurate artillery fire from the German system of trenches, artillery positions, and supply centres, and thus assisted directly and indirectly the work of French dash carried these bays and pierced the French gunners. The regular and purposeful bombardment of the Champagne they made progress, but it was slow progress, front began in the middle of August. The long-range guns selected as particular targets stretches of the Challerange-Bazancourt rail way which fed the German lines. On a number of days the bombardment was extremely heavy, and on 22nd September, fine not have been unforeseen by the French. weather helping the aeroplanes in their task of spotting targets, the bombardment mounted to a storm and continued till the morning of the 25th. It is a point worthy of observation that during these three days no private communications were permitted between the army zone and the interior of France, so determined were the French Staff that the secret of their intention should not leak out.

The first results of the French attack, as the infantry swept over their parapets on a 25-kilometre front, was a justification of the preparatory method. The first-line German trenches were unable to offer resistance, and by noon, "practically along the whole front", these positions were occupied by French infantry. But practically all was not quite all. The wave of infantry had here had escaped destruction in the Bois Sabot. and there flowed up against or round strong points which offered continued resistance, and which, besides inflicting heavy losses on Between the Bois Sabot and Hill 200, west the attackers, made a connected and con- of Perthes, the German defences, very tinuous advance beyond them impracticable. difficult, intricate, and well organized, were

crossed with communications and tunnels man artillery, though too late to stop the resembling a wave which, having broken through a barrier, submerges the surrounding country, the French advance became in its second stage impeded by a series of small irregular dams. The first of these dams was encountered in the Auberive zone, where the road ran over the ridge through the big gun positions farther west on the Moronvillers heights. Nevertheless, the the labyrinth of trenches behind. Here though heroically rapid in proportion to the difficulties to be overcome. It was fastest on the right of the road, where the difficulties seemed greatest. The vigorous defence of Auberive, a German bastion, could

Farther east, in the Souain zone, where the German defences were not so finished, the French advance was more remarkable. There had been a great deal of dangerous and delicate preparatory work to reduce the first onset to a rush of about a furlong, which is as much as men can do in face of machinegun fire. The French assault radiated from Souain like three spokes of a wheel, the left spoke pointing towards two wooded hills, the middle one along the road to Somme-Py, and the right on the road to Tahure. The attacks along the first two spokes was at once effective, and especially along the Somme-Py road, where in three-quarters of an hour the French were almost up to Navarin Farm. The advance along the right-hand, easterly spoke was held up by machine-guns which

Between Souain and Perthes the fighting was extremely interesting and very successful. Meanwhile, in the enforced pause, the Ger- known as the "Pocket", and the core of them was in Bricot Hollow to the north. East of Bricot Hollow the country was easy, and the defences were slighter. The main French blow was aimed at these slenderer defences, while the "Pocket" was strongly engaged. The effect was to surge past the "Pocket", envelop it and reduce it, the main attack meanwhile sweeping on northwards and eastwards. The same process went on in the woods to the east of the Perthes-Souain-Tahure roads. Here the attack was admirably successful, and despite the growing difficulties of the advance, the end of the day found the French here digging themselves in on the slopes of Hill 193 and the Tahure ridge.

Next in order to this was something which approached a check. In the Mesnil zone the advance was slow, difficult, and costly. Next to this again success attended the effort, for almost in one dash the attack broke through two woods and some troops reached the crest of the Maisons de Champagne. Here, indeed, for a few flattering hours there were hopes that the cavalry might get through. Last of all, and farther east, the bastion of the Main de Massiges seemed on the point of collapse, for French Colonial troops got right on to the plateau, only to be held up by machine-gun fire. Such is the summary of the day's operations, which sent back 12,000 prisoners to the French cages. The greatest depth of penetration was 2½ miles; and though the two German wings had stubbornly held, the centre had been pushed well in.

No counter-attack developed during the night, and the French brought up reinforcements and moved their heavy guns forward to renew the attack on the 27th. The best commentary on the fighting which took place on that day, and on those following, is contained in the French communiqué of 28th September. "In Champagne the struggle continues without intermission." words, splendid as the French effort was and, in face of the difficulties, continued to be, yet these difficulties did not disappear, but multiplied. For example, on the western wing the attack had been stayed at the wood on the road from St. Hilaire to Souplet, and at the Vedegrange Trench. These were both

carried on the 27th, but farther progress was stayed by a deep area of uncut wire which fenced another series of parallel trenches of the second line of defence, the parallels of the Bois Chevron. On the day after that it was recognized that an entirely new effort must be organized to carry these works. The gain here had been considerable and included 44 guns, but it could not be enlarged without disproportionate cost. Similarly, in the Souain sector, it was not till 28th September that along the whole line the French got into contact with the second German positions. In the course of doing so they enveloped the Bois Sabot and captured the remnants of the machine-gun organization which had held them up.

In front of Perthes the same tale of handto-hand fighting in order to purchase further advance has to be told, and when the French arrived at the German line extending from the Souain Ridge to the Tahure Ridge, belts of undestroyed wire confronted them on the reverse slopes There was nothing to be done except dig in, and the devoted poilus went on building up a system of counterdefence here under the enemy's guns for eight days. So also in the Mesnil zone. Six days were occupied in capturing the northern tip of the Mesnil Ridge, and in encircling the Trapèze Redoubt to the south of it. Hardest of all was the task on the Main de Massiges, with the three hills divided by narrow ravines, as if three fingers of a hand pointing south-west were outspread. There could be no advance between these threatening fingers: the French could but strike at the plateau behind them and then work their way down by bombing parties through the many-veined tunnels and trenches. The struggle went on for days. The numbers of prisoners and guns mounted. tember General Joffre was able to announce that his number of prisoners taken was over 23,000 and the guns 79. But the terms in which the victory was announced also marked its limitations:

"The Germans", ran two successive communiqués, "have not only been forced to abandon on an extensive front positions which were strongly entrenched, upon which they had orders to resist to the end; they have sustained losses, the total of which in killed, wounded, and prisoners exceeds the strength of three army corps . . . (1st October). In Charmagane we gained a footing at several points in the German second position west of the Butte de Tahure and west of the Navarin Farm. At the latter point certain of our troops crossed the German line and advanced to the control of determinedly beyond it, but their progress could not be maintained owing to a barrage of artillery fire and very violent flanking bombardments."

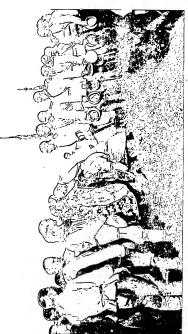
The right interpretation of these summaries soon became plain. The German line had received a very severe testing; the French had won a tactical victory which reflected the highest credit on their Staff work, their artillery, their company and battalion leading, and the fighting spirit of their infantry. But the German line had never parted; it had been entered, but never pierced. The German Staff work appears to have been bad, and their intelligence department defective, for though they had an inkling of the ordeal in store for them, they had not sufficient force on the spot, and the attack and reinforce it when and where their reinforcements were brought up in it was most wanted. In Champagne the a very ragged manner. At the beginning French struck a resounding blow, but it was of Sentember they had seventy battalions unaccompanied by a sufficient number of in line on the Champagne front, and sup- blows struck elsewhere, and they had not plemented these by twenty-nine more before the men to spare to cut through at over-25th September, so that they had about whelming cost, Consequently, the Germans middle of October nearly all these had been of rolling up the edges which Mackensen withdrawn and twenty-three fresh bat- had accomplished against the Russians talions had been brought up. There seems was impossible. The same lesson, with the no doubt that the losses of the Germans parts reversed, was to be repeated when the were a good deal the heavier during the first Germans attacked Verdun in the next year. two days of the battle. If, however, the them. On the reverse slopes of the hills, in all General Joffre sent in 35 divisions and

running parallel to the Challcrange-Bazancourt railway, and therefore shut off from direct observation, were the main secondline defences. These were of a character which continually developed during the war. and at this time consisted of dense sunken fields of barbed wire, pits filled with wire, and behind them a whole system of siege defences with machine-gun bastions, forts, and redoubts supporting one another, Tunnels were dug to communicate with trenches on the nearer slopes of the hill.

In short the French encountered in Champagne the genesis of the Hindenburg line, of which the foundations were laid next year-a monument of German ingenuity and industry. Several years had to elapse before a means of breaking a Hindenburg line were found; the means consisting of an overwhelming preponderance of guns, and a capacity on the part of leadership to mass 115,000 involved in the battle. Before the were able to patch up the rent, and the feat

General von Falkenhayn, who was Chief German ineapacity in the extremely testing of Staff in the Western area at this period, circumstances proved very expensive in losses remarks of the French effort in Champagne of men, their strategie grasp of the situation that it failed, as all attempts to break through had been little shaken, and their judgment, failed, when the moral of the opposed even in the face of a reverse, had not been side was sound. In his memoirs you Falfound wanting. The French had, indeed, kenhayn says that the French attacked on demonstrated that, given sufficient gun am- the first day with 17 divisions, and so dismunition, a way could be paved for infantry organized and damaged the front of the through the most complicated defences; but German Third Army that its Head-quarters the Champagne battle had, in this sense, been Staff considered the advisability of further no more than a demonstration. The accu- withdrawal along the whole front. This was rate preliminaries had enabled the artillery prevented, in fact, by the intervention of to smash up the first line, but when the in- General von Knobelsdorf, Chief of Staff of fantry reached the German second line they the neighbouring German Fifth Army; and became aware, for the first time, of the for- Great Head-quarters confirmed his advice midable range of defences here awaiting subsequently. Von Falkenhayn adds that





RUSSIAN SOLDIERS KISSING AN IKON BEFORE GOING INTO BATTLE

used 2000 heavy and 2000 light guns. Von the discrepancy between the two opposed Falkerihayn, however, appears to exaggerate armies.

CHAPTER VII

ON THE RUSSIAN FRONT: WINTER AND SPRING, 1914-15

Baltic to the Bukovina, could not remain way of carrying the war into German terristatic after the violent shocks which it had tory. The occupation of Galicia and the sustained or administered in East Prussia holding of the Carpathian passes were accesand the line of the Niemen; in Poland and sory before the fact, both because it was on the line of the Vistula, and in Galicia and necessary to clear the Russian left before an the line of the Carpathians. For a long time advance could be made, and because the after the counter-balancing events of the possession of the Carpethian passes by the eviction of the Prussians from East Prussia, Russians must carry with it a menace to and the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Hungary. Hungary was a granary, and armies in Galieia and South Poland, the scales swayed violently at each end of the Eastern front. On 24th September, 1914, for example, the Russians invested Przemysl; in the Carpathians, the new tactics of Hinon 26th September and two days later the denburg 1 claim attention. The Russians Battle of the Niemen was being fought by could not be diverted in the most northerly the forces of Hindenburg and Ruzsky. For a period the balance at both ends dipped in favour of the Russians, who advanced rapidly towards the Carpathian passes, oecupying the broad and most westerly Dukla Pass, and sending a cavalry raid into Hungary in the last days of September, while on 1st October they began that nine days' battle of Augustovo in which General Rennenkampf's left wing drove the Germans back through the forest, going in at one side of it and leaving as many German soldiers dead there in the tangled fighting ar escaped at the other side.

Hindenburg withdrew with losses which dimmed the prestige of his Tannenberg victory, and in spite of reinforcements in the Masurian Lake region, thus abandon-Austrians in the south by action in the north. Instead he was appointed to command in the centre of the line, where a fresh attack on Warsaw might divert the Russians from any attempt to press on to Cracow. An advance on Cracow was the core of Russian strategi-

The Russian front, extending from the cal aims, because it was the most militant supplied horses. Galicia held the oil-wells which were of such value for motor transport.

Before considering the Russian campaign sector; a blow at Warsaw would certainly compel attention. It might, if successful give the German armies comfortable winter quarters, and a first-rate base for operations in the spring. For the attainment of this object Hindenburg obtained considerable forces: the 5th, 6th, and 17th Corps, the bulk of the reserves from the abortive Niemen campaign, including the East Prussian 20th Corps, as well as Saxon and Bayarian troops and Landwehr from the home reserves. On his right he had a stiffened Austrian army under General Dankl. In one way or another Hindenburg's centre from Thorn to Czestochowo numbered some 700,000 men, and the Austrian army in Cracow, the forces shut up in Przemysl and acting along retired to the shelter of prepared positions the Carpathians, probably brought up the whole number of the Central Powers' forces ing the attempt to relieve the pressure on the on the Eastern front to somewhere above 2,000,000 men. The Russian armies at that time in the field were much smaller than they were said by popular rumour to be,

> ¹ It is to be remembered that though Hindenburg was the communder on the Eastern Front, General Ludendorff was the Chief of Staff, responsible for the strategy of the lt is to be re

were certainly undergunned

of a parallel advance. The Austrians were attack. A Russian force crossed the Vistula to advance from Cracow on to the line of under cover of the guns of Novo Georgievsk the San River, so as to compel the Russians (north-west of Warsaw), and struck so hard to fall behind that tributary of the Vistula, at the German left centre as to force it back and so raise the siege of Przemysl. In the from the Vistula into an east-and-west posinorth there was a flank movement up the tion. The battle thenceforward reduced Vistula from the fortiess of Thorn by means atself into two fights of the river and the Thorn-Lowicz railway The centre advanced by the two main lines, up (at Josefox) had been simultaneously and Kalisr - Lodz - Lowicz, and Czestochowo vigorously pushed A feint attack between Skierniewice, for the direct assault on Warsaw and Ivangorod had been blown to Warsaw Hindenburg's intention was to pieces by Russian artillery. The main make his right centre the principal arm, and attack at the Josefov narrows met with by a vigorous thrust, which was to be sup- another kind of disaster. The Germans ported by Dankl's Austrian army, to force crossed in pontoons to a bank apparently the Vistula at Josefov, where the river was all defended. But after they had crossed narrow and the Russian communications General Ruzsky fell on the force while it weakest The Russian railway communica- was still in difficult country 8 miles south tions were everywhere extremely bad, while of Nova Alexandriev and cut it to pieces those of their enemics were not merely good (21st October) Next day the Russians thembut strategically designed At Josefov the selves crossed the river at Nova Alexandriev, disparity was greatest

Generalissimo could have cut the main line the Pilitza tributary. It was a soldiers' from Warsaw to Kiev at Lublin, and at once battle, fought hand-to-hand in the spruce have brought about the disruption of the two woods near Glovaezov It is said that wings of the Russian line It failed because 16,000 men, Germans and Russians, were the Russian General Staff perceived the buried here General Ruzsky, with his danger and withdrew all the Russian forces forces over the river, threw every man and in good time behind the Vistula and the San every gun at the enemy, and drove the Ger-Ivanoff's army of Galicia conformed to the mans to Radom (2rth), and subsequently to general movement a field army was put into Kielee (3rd November), where prisoners and position to defend Warsaw, and the Vistula guns were taken The German thrust south bridge-head at Ivangorod, higher up, was

strongly held

On 10th October Hindenburg's centre was at Lodz, and after a slow and deliberate defences began on Friday 15th and lasted till Lodz the 19th, and the brunt of the blow fell on just arrived from Moscow That was the

They were probably outnumbered. They in entrenehed positions beyond the western Warsaw defences On the fourth day the Hindenburg's plan of campugn was that Germans were kept busy with a counter-

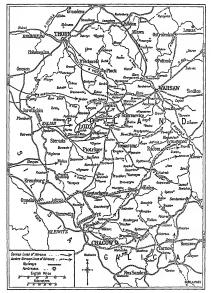
The attempt to cross the Vistula higher and, extending along the banks, began the If this plan had succeeded, the German southern half of a new battle, the Battle of of the Pilitza had been a complete failure, and Ruzsky's victory here determined the success of the Russian counter-attack (under Rennenkampf) north of Warsaw With both advance of five days the Germans joined flanks turned Hindenburg's left and centre battle along the Vistula line The critical were compelled to retreat, and the Russians assault of 5 army corps on the Warsaw took in succession Skiernicvice, Lowicz, and

The solitary success, a short-ined one, of the Siberian army corps, which had but the first advance on Warsaw was obtained by the Austrian armies under the Archduke first surprise for the attackers the second Josef and General Woyrsch, which, linking was that the Russians were supported by up with Dankl's army on the Nidi, crossed Japanese heavy artillery For the first day the San in face of General Radko Dimithe battle hung in the balance the second trieff's outnumbered Russians, captured and third days saw the Russians consolidated Jaroslav and relieved Przemysl before they unfortunate country of Poland, where the losses operations took place There was foresight possible through West Poland

Russian attack in the south, and the German herian reinforcements came up, as well as

were forced to retreat once more by the attack in the north, can broadly be said to falling back of the Germans As Hinden- have reacted on one another, though naturburg fell back he left a desert behind him, ally had the Russians heen faced with hut a procedure which was subsequently imi- / one tasl, they could have pressed forward tated by the Russians at the expense of the with more than their usual contempt of

Hindenhurg's second attack on Wa.saw as well as method in Hindenburg's destruct from the north may he disposed of first tion, which was a preparation in advance. The Russians became aware of it on 13th for another blow at the Russians from the November, when a strong force brought up north, a blow which could be aimed with by rail from Thorn hegin to press Ruzsky, greater security if no counter attack were who could expect no help from Ivanoff, Ivanoff being 80 miles south in front of the Moreover, as happened at a later date, and German southern army Ruzsky contracted on a smaller scale, in the Bapaume-Peronne his front and awaited the attack on a line from area in the West, the Hindenhurg temporary Gombin, on the Vistula, to Uniciov, on the retreat disorganized the Russian plans, which Warta The attack, pressed by von Macstill aimed at reaching Cracow before winter kensen, drove the Russians steadily back, set in The Grand-Duke Nicholas, in exacting prisoners and guns, while Ruzsky supreme command, concerved the idea of strove to fall back on the defensive line of striking with his own central forces at the Bzura. The Bzura offered a strong line the German army which had been heaten, of defences, the river fringed with marshes south of the Pilitza, and of trying to with only one good passage, between Kuthem it in hetween General Ivanoff and now and Piontek, but it could be turned from General Dimitrioff, while with his left wing the south, where the Russian left rested on he nursued the Cracon adventure. Hin- no obstacle, and where it could not be reindenburg's northern army was meanwhile forced in time by troops sent up by General retreating safely hehind its own frontiers and Ivanoff In order to keep Ivanoff's hands preparing a counter-stroke For its purpose full, the German army facing him was ordered Hindenhurg and Ludendorff had received to attack again. Then, while lesser flanking new reserves, including 2 corps from you efforts were made on the Upper and Lower Francois' East Prussian forces Despite Bzura, von Mackensen's weight was flung the German losses, the force under Him- against the crossing at Piontek The Rusdenburg for a second blow at Warsaw was stans at first resisted but weight told, and a strong one, numbering perhaps 750,000 on 19th November the resistance gave way, men This army was preparing to strike and for four days German troops were rushed a counter-blow on a comparatively narrow over the crossing. The Russian line fell front the 40 miles hetween the Warta and back, and farther hack, till there was a the Vistula, while the Grand-Duke Nicholas deep hulge in it east of Lodz and south of was still maturing his scheme for the advance Strykov Mackensen burst through the to Cracow, and the German Head-quarters hulge on the 24rd, and Ruzsky's army was Staff, which included von Mackensen, cal-split into two halves, the northern half with culated that their blow could be got in before a wing on the Bzura at Lowicz, and bending the Russian offensive could mature As a at a right angle through Strykov and Brze matter of consecutive occurrence the Rus- sany, the other in another right angle facing sian attack did mature, and the advance it, with Lodz inside the corner of the angle towards Cracow was set in motion by the It was a most perilous position for the Rus-Grand-Duke It failed, but its failure was stans, for whose further discomfiture German due not to the German counter-stroke but troops were every hour hurrying up But to the resistance offered by the Austro-Hun- the breakage had been on a narrow front, garian armies The two movements, the and at the supreme moment Russian-Si-



The Polish Campaign: map illustrating the struggle for Warsaw, October-December, 1914

German corps, which had thrust into the was dispatched from the north. He arrived balloon-shaped salient, which were in peril. 24 hours too late—one of those incidents

first aid from Ivanoff. These new forces. Ruzsky strove with all his might to tie up flung into the battle, cut off the apex of the the neck of the balloon, and from south and German wedge (24th November), and the north every Russian that could be gathered situation was reversed. It was now the two was sent there to do it, and Rennenkampf have determined a campaign, or even a saw, were not reached. This achievement war.

which every helligerent showed, the belief sequent disasters which overtook the Russian is an illusion. The Germans extracted them- armies should not be permitted to obliterate selves from the salient, not without great the courage and great sacrifice by which it loss-" our losses", admitted a German was achieved. communiqué "were naturally not light". Mackensen's only course was to hold the was contemporaneous with the Russian neck of the salient with fresh troops, while effort to reach Craeow. From the 12th of those inside forced their way out. The November, when Russian eavalry reached process occupied three days, and then-an Micchow, north of Cracow, the forces of apt commentary on the recuperative powers Radko Dimitrieff (under Ivanoff) went of armies - Hindenburg endeavoured to steadily forward till they were on the Raba, again, while with his right wing he endea- Brussiloff had meanwhile cleared his left by youred to envelop the Russian left towards occupying in turn the Uzsok, Lupkow, and Petrikov. The Russian Commander-in- Dukla passes of the Carpathians. It was Chief responded by a shortening of his front now clear, however, both to Germans and lost heavily in the fighting. Hindenburg's were set in motion against General Ivanoff. the Bzum and well east of Lowicz; at the from the western Carpathians; the other, East Prussia, which advanced on a 16-mile 2 Austrian corps with Hungarian divisions. railway line from Warsaw to Petrograd.

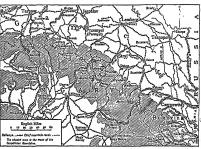
on the Rawka. They failed, and the Blonie the eastern bank of the Nida across the lower You. VI.

which, had they fallen out differently, might positions, the conventional defences of Warin repelling the German attacks must always Yet, in view of the reesperative power rank high in Russian history, and the sub-

It was the more remarkable because it plinck victory from defeat by sending von and cavalry scouts in the outer suburbs of Mackensen against the Lodz-Lowiez front Cracow at Wielitza (5th December). General and an evacuation of Lodz; a necessary as Austrians, that some positive measures must well as prudent step, for the Russians had be taken to stem this advance, and 2 armies second counter was to renew his blows on One of the Austro-Hungarian corps, with the Russian right wing, which was north of German divisions added, struck at his left same time he set in motion his forces from striking at the Carpathian passes, were of front from Mlaws in an attempt to reach the At the same time a force was advancing against Ivanoff's right from Czestochowa. This second force was held up by a Rus- The clash came on 8th December, when sian advance to meet it from Novo Georgi- Radko Dimitriess was forced to withdraw evsk. But the thrust against the northern after fighting a successful engagement in Bzura army was more effective. The Rus- front of Cracow, because his right was sian front was awkwardly posed astride the engaged, and his left rear threatened. Four Bzura, and again the Grand-Duke Nicholas days later disaster happened. The Dukla saw that the only safe form of resistance lay Pass was lost (12th December). Dimitrieff's in "refusing" the left wing. The weather, position became at once untenable, for the which was unusually mild and sodden, and Dukla is the easiest and best of all the Carrendered the country a chaos of bog and mud, pathian passes. He at once fell back, till helped him in his decision. He got behind his right was behind the River Nida, east of the Rawka, the tributary of the Bzura, at the lower Dunajec (or Donajetz) and thence the same time retiring his left, till his line by Jaslo to south-east of Krosno. Even ran from the Vistula, behind the Bzura, there the retreat was not at an end, for the through Skierniewice and Rawa to Inovolodz Austrians retook the Lupkow and Uzsok and Opoczno. Against this line the battle Pass in turn. For a time it seemed as if lasted nearly three weeks, from 7th to 24th Przemyal might again be relieved. But by December. The fiercest German attacks 20th December the Russian retreat had were between the 10th and Christmas Eve, reached its limits, and Ivanoff turned on the against Sochazew on the Bzura and Bolimov advancing Austrians. He drove them from

and Uzsok Passes.

Dunajec and the Biala, and the Russian left Przemysl fell, and seemed in its falling to once again seized the foot of the Dukla Pass, be an augury of the highest success. That Some 10,000 Austrians were cut off, and by success never came, and it can now be per-Christmas Day Brussiloff was again in pos- ceived that in striving to compass it Russia session of the Galician exits to the Lupkow was exhausting herself to a point which rendered her incapable of resistance when The struggle for the Carpathian passes the final German blow, so many times was long maintained, and the communiqués resisted, came armed with all that weight of issued in 1915 gave very little idea of what artillery which then and thereafter was to was really going on there; for while on the prove in more than one theatre the determin-



The Campaign in the Carpothams

one hand a Russian cavalry raid was sometimes interpreted as an advance in force, the results of a Russian check were represented by Austro-Hungarian bulletins as Russian disasters.

The Carpathians rise in height and difficulty from west to east. The chief passes are the Dukla, broad and low, the Lupkow, the Uszok (railway), the Mezo Laborez, the Beskid, the Tucholka (or Voreczke), the Wyzkow, the Wisloka, the Delatyn or Jablonitza, the Borgo, and the Kirlibaba. The Russians carried on a struggle in the centrally situated of these passes during the

ing factor between equal forces, especially when surprise was coupled with it.

It will, perhaps, be more convenient to consider the Carpathian campaign as a whole. than to attempt to co-ordinate it in point of time with the northern campaign. During January and February Russia did not hold the passes in a military sense; that is to say Brussiloff's troops could not use them for an advance into the plains south of them. Rather were they employed in resisting the Austro-Hungarian attempt to win a way back through them in order to relieve Przemysl. While the struggle was in progress the first five months of 1915, and did so while extreme Russian left moved through the their northern armies were fighting Hinden- Bukovina, which, with Czernowitz, had been burg. While their effort was in progress in Russian hands since the victory of Sziret, in Hungary. This was not a serious the roads from them can meet in Galicia. but rather a quasi-political manustre de- owa, during February and March, the troops signed as an invitation to Roumania. It of Brussiloff and von Linsingen fought a became necessary to the Central Powers to battle which was bloody and costly indeed, neutralize this invitation, or this threat, and but which saved Stryj and Lemberg, and Austria-Hungary received a new stiffening, both politically and from a military standpoint. Count Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, to the Wyzskow was the German General von Linsingen, with a German staff and some German divisions: from the Wyzskow to the Bukovina was General von Pflanzer-Baltin's army, also with German troops,

This machine becan to operate in the last week of January. It worked very badly at the Lupkow and the Dukla, where Dimitrieff was of a good deal of assistance to Brussiloff by holding up the Austrians at the Vistula: east of the Lupkow, however, the passes fell before von Linsingen, whose forces poured through the Beskid (railway), the Tucholka, and Wyzskow, and advanced towards Lemberg and Stryj through the Galician plain. Farther east still von Pflanzer-Baltin had no difficulty in crossing the range through the passes leading to Stanislau and Kolomea, and his extreme right easily dispossessed the Russians of the Kirlibaba.

Here, however, the strategy of the campaign seems to have blundered. The two points selected for goals of the attack may be designated as Stryj, in the centre, which led to the upper valley of the Dniester and Przemysl, and Stanislau, on the east. The German-Austrian effort concentrated on

Lemberg. On the 17th of January they took Linsingen came into Galicia though the the Kirlibaba Pass, which leads to Marmaros Tueholka and the Beskid (railway). Before edvance (the Borso Pass was not attempted), the ridge of Koziowa intervenes. At Kozigave reinforcements time to come up to help the hard-pressed Russian left wing.

The Russians could not be dislodged from was enabled to put one of his nominees, Koziowa. While Koziowa was held, and Count Burian, into the position of Foreign while Russian resistance could not be beaten Minister, and Tisza became the power down at the Uzsok, Lupkow and Dukla behind the armies. He demanded German Passes, the Austro-Hungarians had no room assistance, and got it. Three new Austrian for deployment in the Dniester valley, and armies were formed under the nominal com- could not eo-operate with their advance mand of the Archduke Eugenç. In the farther castwards. This advance made better Carrathian section, from the Dukla to the progress, for, moving from the Bukovina and Uszok, was the army of General Boehm- through the Jablonitza Pass, it converged on Ermolii to relieve Przemysl: from the Uszok Czernowitz and engulfed Kolomea: and at the beginning of March took the important railway junction of Stanislau. But on 3rd March the Russians, who had been fighting delaying actions, were reinforced: Stanislau was recaptured, and the Austrians were pushed back towards Kolomea.

By 21st March the Austrian offensive had been stayed, in the sense that it had neither reached Lemberg nor relieved Przemysl; and on 22nd March Przemysl, after an investment of seven months, surrendered to the Russians. It had remained so long inviolate because General Selivanoff, who invested it, had only 100,000 men, and no siege-guns with which to reduce it. It was far too heavily garrisoned for its importance, some 150,000 men, including many cavalry, having been packed into it. General von Kusmanek, who commanded, seems to have been content to regard it as good winter quarters, escape from which could easily be arranged in the spring, and he neglected the opportunity to abandon the trap when he had the opportunity in late October. One more chance was given to him in the middle of December, when General Ivanoff was falling back from Craeow, but it was dissi-Stryj and the relief of Przemysl, instead of pated in an abortive sortie which cost 3000 on crushing the Russians farther east. In men (15th December), and after that only spite of this concentration it failed before the one further attempt was made. On 13th difficulties of the Carpathian foot-hills. Von March the Russians begun in earnest to large scale was attempted by the best troops pressure looked like succeeding. available, including a Hungarian division, It was ill-directed, and moved right up to a saw. But it had been made at a point where Russian artillery position, with the result that the Russians had road and rail by which to many were killed, and 4000 prisoners left in reinforce, and the Russian counter-attack of Russian hands. Four days later, on Monday, the 4th February broke it up. This was 22nd March, the Austrian commander blew the last of the frontal attacks on Warsaw, and up his ammunition, his guns, and the bridges was a costly failure. It was replaced by the over the River San; and having done the strategy of the attack on the flanks. work of destruction very thoroughly General on the southern flank was entrusted to the von Kusmanek surrendered the town and Austro-Hungarian forces, and has been degarrison at nine o'clock in the morning, scribed in preceding pages. That on the Some 120,000 prisoners, of whom 2600 were northern flank was, in the first place, a Gerofficers, and 1000 guns, were the prize of cap- man reaction to the Russian raid towards ture. A good many of the guns were useless, and much ammunition had been destroyed, by a force, under General Baron Sievers. The chief value of the surrender to Russia of 4 corps (Tenth Russian Army). East was that it removed a complication, and Prussia at that time was weakly garrisoned, freed General Selivanoff's investing force.

armies the winter of the early year had similarly been occupied by warfare that, according to ordinary calculations, the conditions should have barred. But Germany knew quite well of the growing shortage of the ammunition of the Russians, and trusted that, whatever attrition of men and resources was incurred by herself, would be reproduced on a greater scale on the Russian side, and with more exhausting results. During the month of January, except for the raid in Bukovina, and another one in the extreme northern wing towards Tilsit, the Russian forces attempted no active offensive, and wing of 2 corps had to face an attack by the Germans opposite Warsaw seemed con- double their numbers, and they fought a tent to relapse into trench warfare, which series of very fierce rear-guard actions, of their resources in guns, gas, and other which the severest was in front of Lyck, modern ingenuities enabled them to make When the rear-guards were driven back from more harassing to the Russians than them- these positions, however, the bulk of the selves. On 1st February, however, von troops had got away. Von Eichorn's army Hindenburg abandoned these tactics for a occupied Mariampol, in Russia, on the 12th frontal attack on the Russian positions on February; von Bülow was not on Russian soil the Bzura and Rawka. The preliminary till the 15th, and was then moving towards artillery bombardment embraced the whole Grodno and Ossowiecz. By that time, howfront of the Rawka (south) from Skierniewice, ever, the Russians, who had suffered severe, through Bolimov to the confluence with the but not excessive, losses, considering the Bzura, and along the Bzura to Sochaczev, difficulty of their retreat, were behind the but the spearhead of the attack was made on Niemen and Bobr lines, and prepared to the 7 divisions on a front of 7 miles in counter-attack an enemy who had now left front of Bolimov, the centre. The thrust his railways behind.

attack the defences, and carried the north- was well provided, and heavily pressed from east segment. Four days later a sortie on a 2nd to 4th February, and at its highest

It had advanced 5 miles towards War-Tilsit and East Prussia, which had been made and by 6th February the Russians were close In the northern sector of the opposed on Tilsit, and held a long straggling line from there behind Insterburg and Lotzen to Johannisburg.

On 7th February Hindenburg had ready for it one of his railway surprises, and directed against it 2 armies, comprising o corps under Generals Eichorn (northern army, Insterburg to Lotzen) and General von Bülow (Lotzen to Johannisburg). The Russians were compelled to retire as best they could, the northern half experiencing the greater difficulty, and one of its corps (20th, General Bulgakov) splitting up in the forests north of Suwalki. The southern

left, and though, concentrating under the tration at Allawa to attack their line on the cover of forest, he got a body of the 21st 18th; and began to advance on a 25-mile Corns across the Niemon, they were unable front on 22nd February. The Russian to advance to cut the railway. Another brigade at Prasnysz was overwhelmed; the attack on Ossowiccz failed, as had the first, Russian division between there and the river one month before, and by 5th March the assailed on the 23rd. On the 24th what siege had been raised, von Eichorn's troops had happened before happened again. The had left their bridge-head on the Niemen, division held out till reinforcements came up, and the Russians were falling on them from and the reinforcements, ill-equipped as they behind as they retired through the forests. were, drove the Germans back with bomb Meanwhile, Hindenburg had set in motion and bayonet. It is certain that at this time another and heavier attack, south of this on many Russian soldiers had not even rifles, the Narew. It was a plan designed on and the hattle of 24th February, which familiar lines, and dependent for its success resulted in the recapture of Prasnysz on on breaking the Russian defences before 26th February, is one of the many monutheir ill-constructed communications could ments to the wonderful fighting power of bring up reinforcements. The Narew flows the Russian infantryman before his spirit tortuously south-westwards through marshes was broken by mismanagement and intrigue. and forests, with towns at its chief crossings The Germans retired in good order, though till its confluence with the Bug. The War- they left 10,000 prisoners behind; and the saw-Petrograd line is well south of it, and failure on the Narew, added to that on the sends branches which join at Ostrolenka on Niemen, ended the attempt to capture the Narew. From Ostrolenka a road runs. Warsaw from the north. The months of to Mlawa through Prasnysz, a junction of February and March, 2015, mark the highest six roads in a region of low hills.

Russians had a brigade at Prasnysz: between knew how exhausting these achievements it and the river a division; the direct forces had been, or how beggared it had left their on the Narew, under General Plehve, were resources.

Von Eichorn could do little on the extreme weak. The Germans began their concenlevel of Russian defensive achievement: but In the middle of February, 1915, the except themselves (and the Germans) few

CHAPTER VIII

RUSSIA AND THE GREAT GERMAN-AUSTRIAN OFFENSIVE OF 1915

1915, to the struggle between the Russians Russian left from Koziowa to the Delatyn

The release of the Russian army which and the Austro-Hungarians for the crests had been investing Przemysł placed 100,000 of the western Carpathians. Attack and more men at the disposal of the Grand-Duke counter-attack followed, and the struggle Nicholas, simplified transport, and removed for the Uzsok Pass, which was especially certain anxieties. The men could be used severe, seemed to typify the climax of a to strengthen the Russians who were still struggle which in its issue held the future holding back the Austrian right centre at of the Hungarian plains. By the 22nd of Koziowa, or they could reinforce the efforts April some seventy miles of the range had which were being made by Brussiloff to force been captured by the Russians, together with the Uzsok and Lupkow Passes. Some were 70,000 prisoners and 30 guns-rather a disused in both these endeavours, and the eyes proportion in numbers-and still the Austroof all who watched the Eastern theatre of Hungarians held on. They did more: they war were turned during March and April, counter-attacked on 25th April, on the

this were a last effort to take pressure from and rightly judged, would be sufficient to the other end of the Carpathians, and that smash an opening in the far-less-competentlythe Austrian front was hard beset. Ap- fortified Russian lines. Germany in 1015 pearances were more than deceptive-they appreciated better than her adversaries the were deliberately contrived to deceive. The conditions which made a break-through Austrians were merely fulfilling their part possible, and was well informed as to the in the larger German plan, which, conceived state of munition exhaustion of the Rusby the able minds of the Great German sians, General Staff,1 aimed at keeping the Russians fully employed on the extremely diffi- his resources, the intention was cloaked by cult Carpathian enterprise while a blow was one or two minor thrusts. Bavarian divibeing prepared for them elsewhere. It sions were sent to help von Linsingen and seems to those who are wise after the event towards the Bukovina, and, in response to a that this blow should have been anticipated Russian raid on Memel, on the extreme by the Russian High Command, and that north (17th March), an expedition from its whereabouts might have been approxi- East Prussia crossed the Russian frontier mately defined, since Germany would en- and took Tauroggen (25th March). Meandeavour to make use of her strategic railways while three quarters of Germany's winter to impart to the blow its utmost effectiveness. output of shell was taken to Cracow and Consequently a blow was to be expected secretly carried up towards the Dunajec somewhere on that awkward line of the Vistula from which Russian masses could army believed itself securely entrenched. with such difficulty deploy, yet which, because of its length, must somewhere be weakly held. But Germany's well-kept secret was by the nature of things hard to plumb, because none of her enemies in the spring of 1915 was aware of her real strength, or of her immense resources in material.

While the Allied publics were being fed to repletion with the fable that Germany, having expected a short war, could not possibly be prepared for a long one, Germany was crowding on a full head of steam in the effort to shorten the war in the only way possible, namely, by beating her enemies in towards efficiency in the production of muni-

Pass, and kept up the pressure here for a sufficient scale) to break through her fortified lines, while amassing secretly a battering-To a superficial onlooker it seemed as if ram of material and men, such as she judged.

> While von Falkenhayn was marshalling (Donajetz) lines, where Dimitrieff's Russian After it came the guns till more than a thousand of every calibre were placed in position; and after the guns, came the concentration of supplies and of men. Russia could not, and did not, remain entirely ignorant of these preparations; but the interpretation of them was faulty, and the impregnability of Dimitrieff's positions was overrated. They were not impregnable, because they were not deep enough to resist an overwhelming mass attack of artillery. The Russians had beaten off men; they could not beat off shells, especially when their own guns, and often their own rifles, were empty. The Russian commands remained little

the production of the machinery of war, altered during the spring, except that Ruzsky, While Great Britain was staggering painfully really ill, handed over his northern command to Alexieff. In the southern group of tions, and was squabbling about "con- armies, Evert had the army on the Nida, scription", Germany was mobilizing every Dimitrieff that on the Donajetz and Biala, available man and woman, and was lighting Brussiloff the Carpathian armies, and Lechevery furnace in every factory that could itsky the extreme left towards Stanislau. turn out explosives or guns. Thus she was Ivanoff was in command of the group, which accumulating on the Western Front enough 'was large in numbers, but poor in equipment. material to blow back the efforts (on an in- The German commands on the other hand 'Von Felkenhyn was then Chief of Staff, and he indicates that the plan enamated from General Head-quarters rather than from Lorendstoff.

Von Mackensen was placed in command of

the whole southern group, which comprised Its heavy batteries numbered at least 1500

the armies, running east to west, of von picces. Von Falkenhayn says that heavier Bothmer and von Pflanzer-Baltin (opposite guns were employed there than hitherto Leehitsky), von Linsingen (at Koziowa), used in the field, and that von Mackensen's Boehm-Ermolli, von Boins, and von Mar- striking force consisted of a German and witz (all opposite Brussiloff), von Woyrsch 7 Austro-Hungarian divisions, It had to



those of the whole Russian southern front, their fists.

(Upper Vistula), the Archduke Josef Fer- help it the whole Austrian strength of somedinand and von Mackensen's phalanx oppo- thing over a million adequately-equipped site Dimitrieff. Von Mackensen's army, men; and the total force, from the Nida to the strongest yet mustered under one to the Sereth, which was to strike, at Macgeneral, was stiffened by what afterwards kensen's impulse, the hardest blow Russia were known as shock troops or shock divi- had yet sustained, was about 2,000,000 men. sions—the cream of the fighting corps— Russia could put into the field as many men but numerically it was very powerful, with to oppose it, but she could not arm them: artillery supports incomparably superior to they would have to fight their enemies with

On Wednesday, 28th of April, 1915, the machine was set in motion and began with an advance of von Mackensen's right on the upper Biala towards the Carpathians and Gorlice. It was a part skilfully chosen to mask the real import of the coming blow, for there had been minor attacks at this point before. Dimitrieff was not wholly blind to the impending attack; he was growing anxious, and had applied to the group commander. Ivanoff, for strong reinforcements. They did not arrive, owing to some blunder the true cause of which may some day be revealed, and Dimitrieff was left to play the part of a forlorn stand in a modern Thermopylæ. For two days the attack went on, forcing Dimitrieff to weaken his centre and right to hold his left together. Then, while he was still unsteadied by the feint attack. the real assault was launched on 1st May, with all the weight and impetus which von Mackensen could muster. The spear-point of the attack was directed towards Cziekowice, midway between Tarnow and Gorlice, It was taken, and northwards hundreds of guns blew the Russian trenches out of existence. The German force in possession joined hands with that farther south and turned the whole of Dimitrieff's front. The next day there was no Russian front; the line of the Dunajec (Donajetz) and Biala had been pierced, the Russians could do no other than retreat hot-foot to the doubtful line of the Wisloka River, 20 miles eastwards, shedding guns, equipment, and prisoners. In the south, where the intricacies of retreat among the foot-hills were greater, the losses were most severe. The 48th Division hardly existed when its remnants cut their way out. General Korniloff was taken prisoner.

On the Wisloka-no guns, no prepared possibilities of a successful defence of so cutting their way out.

bad a line as the Wisloka grew smaller. The Russians clung to their improvised trenches for five days; and then the accumulating pressure of von Mackensen's phalanx pierced the line at the railway-crossing of Jaszlo (7th May). The Wisloka line was consequently in the same case as that of the Donajec had been, and with its loss the troops of Brussiloff at the Dukla Pass were in grave danger of being cut off. They had to fall back lest their communications should be severed, and their goal was the upper reaches of the next eastward river, the Wistok, a worse line of defence in the circumstances than the Wisloka,

By 8th May the Germans were at the Wistok, and were crossing it. The Russians' right, subjected to less pressure than the left, had preserved its steadiness, and Evert's army had fallen back from the Nida to the Czarna in good order, but the forcing of the Wistok had made a 30-mile gap in the Russian line, through which it seemed that Mackensen's forces might pour, and thereafter turn to roll up the edges to north and south.

Brussiloff's divisions in the western Carpathians stood the greatest risk from such a possibility. The Russians set about to avert it by throwing forward strong reinforcements from Sanok, on the Galician side of the Lupkow Pass, to dam the southern flood while Brussiloff extricated his men from the region between the Dukla and the Lupkow. This was effected with heavy losses on 9th and 10th May; and before the extrication was complete the whole Russian line began to fall back as quickly as possible to the line of the San River north of Przemvsl. and thence over broken country south of Przemysł to the Koziowa position. As the line in its southern sector was thus retired positions-the Russians made the stand of it ripped away from the Carpathians those desperate men. Reinforcements had been of its forces which had won the crests with hurried up, including a Caucasian corps, such painful toil and sacrifice. In ten days and these assailed the Germans while there the results of five months' fighting had been was yet some equality between the combat- surrendered. By 14th May the new line ants owing to the slower advance of the had been taken up, and, in a sense, the great German artillery. They took prisoners, gap that Mackensen had rent had been in spite of their own mortal losses, but as repaired, though Dimitrieff, in his 85-mile cach day the German guns grew stronger retreat, had lost heavily, and numbers of and the artillery storm was renewed, the Brussiloff's divisions had lost still more in

guns was in a material sense the measure of tween 9th and 15th May Lechitsky, striking ship that, pereciving the inevitable, they action, which was on the San. accepted it formidably. They retreated on its success.

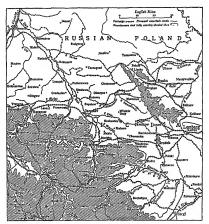
The first concern of the Grand-Duke's 30,000 casualties, most of them inflicted by holding out a hand to the forces farthest east the Russian infantrymen. South of Evert under von Pflanzer-Baltin at Halicz. the Russian troops on the San struck at the on the frontiers of the Bukovina, von Pflan- delay Josef Ferdinand's army. This army

The measure of these losses in men and zer-Baltin had pushed back Lechitsky. Bethe immediate disaster, though its moral hard back, cleared his opponent from the effect in changing so completely the relative Dniester line, and was again threatening attitudes of attacker and attacked could not Kolomea and the oft-retaken Czernowitz. be estimated in the same way. The Russian These blows, swift and remarkable as they armies had now no prospect of re-assuming were, could not alter the general strategy of the offensive in 1915; it became clearer, as the situation, for neither could be pushed time went on, that all their efforts must be far enough to divert the enemy from his bent to fighting a defensive campaign. It is purpose. They gained time. They did not to the highest credit of the Russians' general- affect the centre of gravity of the mass of

The Battle of the San began on 15th May. a vast scale, and, rightly divining that the In the north the Arehduke Josef Ferdinand's German campaign of 1915 must in all army he'd the positions from the Vistula to essentials of magnitude be an Eastern eam- Jaroslav. The Russians held the left bank paign, prepared themselves for vast terri- from Jaroslav to Sieniawa, and thence intorial sacrifices, hoping to recoup themselves elined westwards to the Vistula. From at the cost in men and material which the Jaroslav they held the line of the San Germans would have to pay in advancing (curving round Przemysl, which had been on their heels. The advance which Macken- put in a state of defence, but was not intended sen had made had been costly, in spite of to be held); and their Przemysl salient was eontinued through Dobromiel, Sambar, Drohobycz, to Stryj and the upper Dniester. group-commander, Ivanoff, was to hold The sector of this line principally selected Przemysl (which would certainly have to be by von Mackensen for attack was that beabandoned) long enough to remove his guns tween Jaroslav and Przemysl. The Austroand stores. His first tactical manœuvre was Hungarians under Boehm-Ermolli had deof the offensive-defensive kind. Every's seended from the abandoned western passes. army had been falling back in good order on and were attacking on the south the Russian the right from the Nida to the Vistula, fol- line encircling Przemysl, with a view to lowed by von Wovrsch's Austro-Hungarian holding the Russians there while von Mararmy with a few German divisions. Von witz, farther east, strove to cut the railway Woyrsch assumed that Evert would not from that town to Lembers. The nearest pause till the Vistula was reached. But, point at which von Marwitz aimed was acting under Ivanoff's orders, Evert turned Mosciska. Between von Marwitz (at Samround in a sudden counter-attack (15th May), bar), and the next group of Austrian forces, striking at both von Woyrsch's flanks while were the marshes of the Dniester. But von sending cavalry round on a wide detour to Linsingen, who headed these forces, had attack the Austrian communications. In a been able to take the Koziowa barrier as the three days' battle von Woyrsch was severely Russians weakened, and was now moving handled, and fell back west of Iwaniska with on Stryj and the Dniester valley, while

Before Mackensen's phalanx and its guns Archduke Josef Ferdinand's troops and could come up to Jaroslav the Russians had pushed them back in a similar fashion, if on left the defences of its low hills (16th May), a smaller scale, to the Vistula. These two which had been maintained only long enough actions may be regarded as a counter-blow to enable the rest of the Russian centre to on the enemy's left flank. A similar blow get back over the San, and when this was was aimed far distant at the right flank, where, ensured they sought to do no more than

took Sieniawa on the 18th, and the Russians composed. From the 20th of May onwards in that sector fell back slowly, still fighting, for ten days he held the southern side of the to Lubaczowka. All this time there had bottle-neck, against which von Marwitz been no frontal attack on the Russians still could not lengthen the line of attack eastsurrounding Przemysl. There was conse- wards because of the Dniester marshes; and quently no great urgency in the retreat here; on the north he created a diversion by



The Galician Campugn continuation to Lemberg of the map on p. 71

but a more dangerous situation had been counter-attacking the Archduke, whom he created south of Przemysl, where Marwitz's drove out of Sieniawa again, and in places advance towards the railway had been un- forced him to re-cross the river. Von Macexpectedly swift, and had dented in the kensen had come up, and his heavy attack salient till on the south-western side it was had been successful in crossing the San at threatened with conversion into a bottle- Radymno, which was very near Przemysl neck, under the combined blows of Boehm- on the north, and the possession of which Ermolli and von Marwitz. General Ivanoff narrowed the bottle-neck on that side also. did not, however, allow himself to be dis- But the weakening of the Archduke's army

and he could not press forward before ment of the German steam-roller. Ivanoff allowed him. Ivanoff, however, had time required for the removal of military material; and on 31st May the beginning of Przemysl's fall was signalized by the capture, by Bayarians, of the northern forts. On Wednesday morning (and June) von Mackensen re-entered the town, which vielded no eantures of great profit, but the recovery of which was a symbol alike of Germany's eredit was, for the time being, secure.

von Linsingen's direction. The subordinate June, but it was taken, together with Zolkiev. general captured the height to the north. A day before you Linsingen had secured

on his left flank made his position awkward; it slowed down, did not dislocate the move-

Farther east than von Bothmer, von Linno intention of staying there beyond the singen's right wing co-operated with von Pflanzer-Baltin in foreing Lechitsky's Russian army of the extreme left wing back over the frontier, securing Czernowitz, and taking Stanislau and its railways. More important than this was the renewal of pressure by the German central phalanx. Mackensen easily eleared his left flank towards Sieniawa, and then swung round his military power and ability, and cemented right powerfully towards Aloseiska, on the anew the alliance between the Central Powers. railway, which was captured by von Marwitz In war, as in thiplomacy or business, credit on 14th June. The Russian centre was is of inestimable worth, and Przemysł signi- therefore obliged to fall back continuously. fied alike to Austria-Hungary, to the Balkan and was forced into a weak concave position nations, and to Turkey, that Germany's between the lower San and the Dniester. Part of this position, in the direction of the Of more immediate tactical value was the Dniester and its marshes, was guarded by continue by you Linsinger of Stryi (1st June). a good defensive line, the chain of the Stryj was a valuable railway centre, and its Grodek swamps, which, together, are some possession by the Germans foreshadowed the fifteen miles long, and lie between the Lemdirection of the next blow in the campaign, berg railway and the Duiester marshes. But which in tactics followed an undeviating plan these defences, almost impregnable to direct -namely, heavy pressure on the centre by attack, could easily be turned from the north. Mackensen's slowly moving but erushing Consequently, while von Mackensen sent artillery phalanx, with wide-flung attacks on Boelun-Ermolli to keep the Russians curthe wings. Brussiloff lost men and guns at ployed here, and directed you Pflanzer-Baltin Stryj. Von Linsingen, making the most of and von Linsingen to continue to attack the his advantage, pressed on from Stryj to the Dniester crossings, he swung the bulk of Dniester at Zurawno, which is on firm the forces through the open country of ground free from marsh, and, in fact, the Southern Poland from Sieniawa and Lubacbest river-crossing. On 7th June the passage zow, towards Rawa Russka. There was was forced here, led by von Bothmer under a fierce fight for this key to Lemberg on 20th

and pressed on towards the railway to a crossing of the Dniester at Nizniov. A Tarnonol, reaching a point 40 miles from new salient was being drawn round Lemberg Lemberg. Here, however, his success was and its fate was inevitably that of Przemysl. converted into a reverse. He had advanced The Russians retired from the Grodek too fast for his supplies, and Brussiloff, swamps, which were now merely a trap; pausing in retreat, turned and rent him. Brussiloff withdrew his forces north of the The roads were bad, the Russians were used Dniester, retaining only Haliez; and the to them, and the German artillery was in- Russian centre fell back east of Lemberr to capable of moving quickly over them. The a line between the upper waters of the Bur sum of these factors was that you Bothmer, and that tributary of the Dniester, the Gnila after a three-days' fight, was flung back over Lipa, which had been stormed by the Rusthe Dniester with a loss of 15,000 prisoners, sians in the autumn campaign of 1014. Yet such was the scale on which operations Lemberg was re-entered by Boehm-Ermolli were being conducted in this theatre of war on 22nd June. It was a far more valuable that this reverse was merely local, and, while prize than Przemysł from any and every

point of view. Its possession controlled time another blow, by another group of railways and roads; whoever held it held German armies, might be struck north of the key of Galicia.

On the longest day of the year (21st June), the Russian armies of the south were disposed in the following order and positions. General Evert's army was flanked by the Vistula at von Eichorn, with the Tenth Army of 5 Radom, and extended thence to the con- corps on the Niemen; you Gallwitz and you fluence of the Vistula and the San. Thence Scholtz on the Narew with 7 corps; and in the line ran along the San and turned south Central Poland, linking up with the Archto the valley of the Bug, which it touched duke Josef Ferdinand, were armies under and left at Kamionka, Thence it went due (nominally) Leopold of Bavaria and von south to the Gnila Lina, and so to Halicz on Woyrsch. Reinforcements had been obthe Dniester, and followed the river to the tained by a few drafts from the Western frontier. The Russians had suffered heavy Front, and by 4 new corps, mainly Prussians, losses-and had inflicted them-but Ivanoff's and concentrated at Thorn. The Russians armies were still in being, and having been were quite open-eyed to the danger, and reinforced were still a dangerous barrier to both knew and understood the concentraany further exploitation of territory beyond tion at Thorn. They reinforced, as they the lines they held, more especially when the were well able to do, their armies with the condition of Mackensen's forces and his men to meet the fresh open warfare for ammunition, both weakened in the victorious which Germany and her ally had marshalled

propress, is reparded. of the German Eastern campaign, the Russian High Command might have deplored the attack with easc. The Russian soldier a set-back, but have congratulated themselves that their power of resilience was only expended in place of shell. impaired for a time, while the enemy's force point of inaction. The Russian army of the north was dependent on the railway from Petrograd through Vilna, Grodno, and Bielostock to Warsaw. The southern army was fed by the railway from Ivangorod through Lublin, Cholm, Kovel, and Rovno Warsaw must be evacuated: if both were reached then both of the main Russian Cholm, on the south side of the great salient actions during June.

Warsaw

For the northern part of the design Hindenburg had von Below, with 7 army corps, in Courland at the extreme north; more than 2,000,000 men; but they were If Mackensen's thrust had been the whole unable to raise the ammunition which would have enabled the Russian numbers to resist and Russian territory would have to be Before considering the movements which

had been largely spent. But Mackensen's the German armies of the north undertook recovery of Galicia, and his removal of the when their preparations reached the flash-Russian points d'appui south of the Pripet point, the further progress of von Mackenmarshes, was one-half only of the German sen's forces may be considered. They plan, which rightly aimed at the reduction abated their effort in no degree, except in of the whole of the Russian armies to the so far as the need of waiting for supplies retarded it from time to time; and before they received the large aid of the northern movement they had been supported by an incessant pressure on the part of von Below and other armies of Hindenburg's command in the north. The armies of the Archduke to Kiev. If either of these lines were cut Josef Ferdinand and Mackensen's phalanx swung away from the eastward march, the possibilities of which were exhausted, and armies must fall so far back as to be severed turning acutely northwards moved on a by the Pripet, General Ivanoff was aware broad front towards Lublin, Cholm, and of the threat to his railway line, and never Kovel-the southern face of the Warsaw uncovered it. But Mackensen could still salient. The Russians made no attempt push the Russians back towards Lublin and to stop them, except by small rear-guard The Archduke round Warsaw, which was in June main- reached Krasnik, and Mackensen took tained by the Russian line; and at the same Zamosc on and July. But they were now

approaching the Russian defences of the for the new effort in the north. This was enforcing a price for further advance.

Vistula. The Russians first held this little 15th-16th July. stream against Josef Ferdinand, and when to Luhlin.

Beyond the armies of Josef Ferdinand lucratively, and the hour was approaching east of Mackensen, Boehm-Ermolli, answer-

railway running through Ivangorod, Luhlin, heralded on 6th July by a movement of von Cholm, and Kovel; and the Russians, despite Eichorn's army of the Niemen, and by all their disabilities, were still capable of minor efforts on succeeding dates on the Bzura, on the Bobr, and in front of the little From Krasnik to Lublin runs a good road causeway fortress of Ossowiec, these culby the side of the Bistritza, and a little stream minating in big attacks on the Niemen front, turns westwards from the village to the in Courland, and at Prasnysz on the 14th,

The second battle of Prasnysz, in which evicted fell back to a position on the Lublin General von Gallwitz brought up 5 corps road. At the same time they checked von to the attack, was the signal for the renewal Mackenson at a little distance north of of pressure by every German, and every Zamose, where two rivers, the Wieprz and Austro-Hungarian army from Courland to the Wolitza, formed an angle. The Germans the Dniester. Von Gallwitz's attack was had not got enough artillery up to blast a directed against the Narew line, which way through, and Mackensen had to wait protects the Petrograd railway; and Galltill it came. But while he was strong enough witz's striking force was linked up with one to wait unmolested, Josef Ferdinand was of von Scholtz's to the north, and with von not; and the Russians, scizing on the weaker Eichorn's army on the Niemen line. The commander, fiercely attacked him (5th Russians, forced out of Prasnysz (14th), made July) at Krasnik, Mackensen, separated a good rear-guard stand on the 15th-17th in from his colleague by the valley of the their second positions before falling back to Wienz, could give no effective help, and the river. The Grand-Duke Nicholar, after four days' fighting the Archduke was seeing well that the impending blows, of forced back 2 miles on an 18-mile front, which that of you Gallwitz was probably and had lost 15,000 prisoners. It was a the least serious, would strain all his redisargeeable check, but, like that which sources, had prepared to husband them by Brussiloff had inflicted on von Linsingen reducing his commitments and shortening on the Dniester, it did not put the German his line. There was but one logical outplan out of gear. The Russian general on come to this course, which must involve the Archduke's left, Evert, had pivoted the flattening of the Warsaw salient and the back slowly like a door opening from west abandonment of Warsaw. The first step to east, as the Germans advanced, and just towards doing so was that of relinquishing before the battle of Krasnik extended from the Rawks and Bzura lines (18th), which had Radom across the Vistula (north of Jose- been adopted rather by force of circumfow) and covered the milway from Ivangorod stances than by design in the previous defence of Warsaw.

The northern plan had only begun to and Mackensen to the east Boehm-Ermolli develop with the attack on the Narew. In was moving north eastwards from Lemberg the south, Mackensen's movements had been towards Brody and the frontier; von Lin- resumed on or about the same day. On singen, having crossed the Dniester, was 16th July, Josef Ferdinand returned to an manusuring the Russians back from the attack on the Krasnik road; but this was Gnila Lipa River to the Zlota Lipa-no mean subsidiary to Mackensen's push towards task, though he was aided by Pflanzer-Baltin. Cholm. He had patiently bridged the But by 10th July, when Brussiloff checked streams, brought up artillery on a broad front. Boehm-Ermolli at Kamionka, on the Bug, and by weight of men and metal forced back the position on the south-east had reached the Russians under General Lesch, successor a period of temporary stability. As much to Dimitrieff. By 18th July von Mackensen had been done on this front as could be done was within 10 miles of the railway. To the



Vistula bridge-head at Novo Alexandriev (and subsequently cede Ivangorod) the army in front of Mackensen and his colleague began to be left in the air. In its turn it fell back, towards Lublin,

But though Ivangorod was lost by Evert, and Mackensen's group on its left wing was approaching nearer the southern railway, the more dangerous pressure was that which was being exerted in parallel thrusts north of Warsaw. On 20th July the Russians had mostly been thrown back by von Gallwitz's attack to the eastern bank of the Narew, and, though they held the bridge-heads on the

ing to the general signal for activity, forced western side, the river fortresses were a crossing of the Bug at Sokal; but the real crumpling up under the heavy guns, Diverdanger was not east, but west, of Mackensen, sions from Novo Georgievsk fell harmlessly where von Woyrsch's army was now able on the German flank; von Gallwitz perto detach Evert's hold of the left bank of the sisted in spite of them, and won on the 23rd Vistula. The advance of Josef Ferdinand two crossings over the river. He had to pay and Mackensen on the one hand, and the heavily for them, and could not secure a abandonment of the Bzura lines on the other, broad stretch of the Narew; nevertheless, made Evert's position untenable, and as he an advance, shaped like an arrow-head, was was compelled to fall back and abandon the made between Rozan and Pultusk, and its point extended to the Bug (25th July). Farther to the north than von Gallwitz, another threat, equally serious to the Petrograd railway line, had appeared in the advance of von Below's army. This advance had been begun on 14th July, when von Below crossed the Windawa, which runs into the Baltic at Winday above Libay, and swept towards Tukkum, half-way to Riga. Tukkum fell to his left wing on 20th July: . and his centre began to move on Mitau, so that Riga seemed to be on the point of investment. Below von Below, another advance by Eichorn's left wing threatened the fortress of Kovno; if Kovno fell, the way would be open to Dvinsk and Vilna.

Such was the situation at the beginning of the last week in July, and to the world outside Russia it could not have looked blacker. though worse was to come. But already the evacuation of Warsaw had been resolved on, as a detestable necessity, by the Grand-Duke Nicholas; and, since that was to go, the Russian Head-quarters Staff had another measure to apply to the retirement of their flanks. That retirement, disheartening as it might appear, would not be damaging materially if the flanks could retire in good order, and delay the enemy while the heavy centre, with all its impediments, was withdrawn. It was more vitally necessary in these circumstances to prevent the salient from being nipped on the Narew and the Bug: and it was here that the fiercest fighting took place, and that, in an exact interpretation of the phrase, the Russians made good their retreat. The Germans knew this for the danger zone, and heavily reinforced you Gallwitz and his colleague, von Scholtz, from the 26th July onwards, but the Russians held their ground invincibly.

They could not, however, hold all the

with equal success; for it was inevitable, in cause the Germans had properly disposed their deficiency of artillery, and in the ab- their greatest strength on their flanks. But sence of any efficient counter-battery ma- though Leopold could be held back, it was chinery, that the resistance at the Narew not safe to delay retirement in front of him must entail a heavy loss of life. Even while you Woyrsch on the south, or you Russia's resources of cannon fodder were Gallwitz on the north, might nip the comnot endless, and Evert and Lesch, on the munications eastward of the retirement. The south-west and south of the salient, had to problem of the Russian Staff commanding give way. On 28th July von Woyrsch forced here was to hold on just long enough and the Vistula at several points between War- no longer. They solved it with a coolness saw and the fortress of Ivangorod-which and accuracy that cannot be overestimated. was a badly-constructed stronghold in spite. Their greater peril was from you Gallwitz of its reputation, and could not be suitably and von Scholtz. These were held up on defended—and on 20th July Mackensen, their narrow front from July till 6th August, thrusting forward between Lublin and But on 6th August the fortress of Novo Cholm, cut the railway. Lesch and his Georgievsk was isolated, and von Gallwitz Russian army had done all that could be had advanced eastwards beyond it to where expected of them: they could not now hold the Narew joins the Bug. On the 10th von the railway, and consequently fell back well Scholtz, on the left, took Lomza, and next to the north, leaving Lublin and Cholm to day von Gallwitz, moving between the Bug fall to Mackensen, while they, together with and the Narew, reached the railway line Evert's army, prepared to join themselves to feeding the main line. That forced the the Russians still guarding Warsaw, and still Russians to give up the whole of the lines holding a shrinking salient. It was shrinking on the Narew and the Bug west of this point, in the first days of August like snow in the and heralded a retreat of which the only sun. The western guard of it had come reassuring incidents could be those which back from the Bzura to the Blonie lines; the cut their losses. Meantime the Russian Blonie lines were evacuated without diffi- centre, still retreating with masterly leisure culty on the night of 4th August, and at before Leopold of Bavaria, was at Siedlice; three o'clock next morning the three bridges while von Woyrsch, joining hands with Macof the Vistula at Warsaw were blown up. kensen, was trying to make its position as It was the signal that Russia had given up perilous from the south as von Gallwitz was the capital of Russian Poland, which two doing from the north. On the 12th August hours later was entered by the cavalry of von Gallwitz was at Zambovo; von Scholtz Lcopold of Bayaria.

it, despite the moral and material losses, such the 13th the Russian centre, unhastingly relief as may be granted by the escape from but infallibly, fell back from Siedlice and a salient full of difficulties and costly to hold: Sokolov into the deep forests of the lands of but two great perils still confronted the the Bug. It had gone to earth, and the Russian armies. The first was that the greatest perils of deflating the salient were thrusts of von Below, von Eichorn, or von over, Gallwitz might, after piercing the northern line, envelop one or other of the armies by retreating to Losice, was out of German tolling up its flank. Or the pressure at the reach; but southward von Woyrsch and centre, aided by von Mackensen's up-thrust Mackensen were pushing up towards Brestfrom the south, might force a retreating, and Litovsk, and in the north von Gallwitz, to some extent disorganized, force to fight having established touch with Leopold of with its back to the Pripet marshes.

fronts of the vast salient covering Warsaw Bavaria's army, which was not strong, bewas threatening Bielostock, on the main line The abandonment of Warsaw brought with between Grodno and Brest-Litovsk. On

There were others to come: the centre, Bavaria, was moving south-eastwards also, Retreat the Russians must. They were in the general direction of the fortress. It quite capable of holding up Leopold of may have been the original Russian intention passes through Brest-Litovsk, and to save themselves on the lateral railway which goes to north and south through it. But this was a project which was rendered unavailable because of the premature fall of the fortress of Kovno on the Niemen, which imperilled the Niemen line and exposed any stand on the Bug and railway line to outflanking, besides imperilling the integrity of the great main line from Bielostock through Grodno, Vilna, and Dvinsk, to Petrograd, Koyno was doubly important, because it stood in the way, not merely of the prosecution of the advance of von Gallwitz and von Scholtz, but also of you Eichorn. Von Below had been checked by the Russians on rath August,1 and for a moment the prospects here seemed brighter, and the safety of Dvinsk and Vilna assured. But after a sacrificial resistance to overwhelming siege artillery Kovno collapsed, having held out from 4th August to 17th August, Its garrison of 20,000 men was battered into surrender. Its fall, which was unexpected, though it need not have been, placed the Russians in fresh difficulty, for it allowed von Eichorn to take his army across the Niemen and outflank the Russians on the

That was not the only loss which it involved. It made the fortress of Ossowiec a trap, and compelled a new retirement of the forces to the immediate south. Still farther south Leopold of Bayaria and Mackensen were able to move closer to Brest-Litovsk, which was under gun-fire on the 18th. The next day, Novo Georgievsk, some time since marconed in the flood of the Russian advance, surrendered to the heavy guns of von Beseler, the artillery general who many months before had

to hold the line of the upper Bug, which left to her was not even continuity of line. She had, however, integrity of armies, no one of which had been broken, though they were now in three groups. Alexiesf commanded the northern: with Hindenburg and the subsidiary commands of you Lauenstein, von Below, von Eichorn, von Scholtz, and von Gallwitz against him. General Evert was in the Russian centre, with Prince Leopold and von Woyrsch against him; and General Ivanoff commanded the southern group, and was pitted against von Mackensen (in chief command), Boelim-Ermolli, won Buthmen, and Plannen Billing von Linsingen was in reserve.

In pursuance of the northerly thrust in the Riga sector, the German fleet had attacked Riga on 8th August and had been repulsed. It is a coincidence worthy of remark that on this day Germany made an unsuccessful offer of peace to Russia through Denmark. Needless to say, this tentative approach did not interrupt hostilities; the naval attack on Riga was resumed on 10th August, and there was an inconclusive engagement between the German and Russian fleets near Oesel on the 12th. It was followed by one in which the successes remained with the Russians. On the 18th, after a fight with the Russian fleet, the Germans retired with the loss of the Moltke and another cruiser, as well as eight torpedo-boats. The Germans then endeavoured to land a force at Pernau, near Riga (19th), but the contingents which they got ashore were destroyed, and on the 21st, the disembarkation project having definitely failed, the German flect withdrew from the Gulf.

In three weeks' fighting during August the German centre had advanced roo miles; Warsaw, Ivangorod, Novo Georgievsk, Kovno, and Ossowice had fallen; Brestreduced Antwerp. Its fall (19th August) Litovsk was isolated and, when von Gallinvolved the loss of 20,000 men and 700 witz had broken through at Dobrynka, was guns, but the chief part of the misfortune bound to follow. It fell on 25th August. was its removal as a menace or a hindrance 'The Russian armies were, however, as to the German communications, which it 'already mentioned, intact, and both for had been hoped it would hold up for weeks security during the coming autumn and instead for days. Nothing seemed lacking winter, and as a preliminary to further to add to Russia's discomfiture. What was attack, it was necessary for Germany to advance farther, and to secure a strategical front which could be defended with a smaller

Another repulse on the same date was inflicted on the Germans near Riga, under Lauenstein.



Russian troops preparing to blow up a bridge



to the Eastern campaign. The objectives the Austrians entered Brody on the same which further operations should be under- day. taken to secure were (1), Riga; (2), Dvinsk and Vilna, and the lateral railway line run- Grodno, which was evacuated on 1st, 2nd, ring through them; and (3) the fortresses and 3rd September, a peculiarly daring of Lutek, Dubno, and Royno, which com- counter-attack of the Russians marking the manded the Vollaynian railways south of process of evacuation. On the 2nd and 3rd the Princt marshes-a natural obstacle suffi- also the Germans had to fight very hard for ciently formidable in paucity of communica- the Dyina crossing at Friedrichstadt, Meantions to prevent any operations across them. while (and September), the battle for Vilna

bound to take place, had not occurred too was for an advance along the north bank of soon to prevent General Evert from getting the Vilna River, while von Eichorn, after awar from it with supplies and his guns, the fall of Grodno, pressed up in support He had escaped without being forced to along the southern bank. The Russians, accept battle on unfavourable terms; and meanwhile, burried up every man they could he now had two railways, one to Minsk and spare to the threatened sector, and took up the other to Moseow, to assist his retreat a position through Meiszagowla, 15 miles through the tangle of the Pripet marshes. north-west of Vilna. About Vilna, as so His pursuers were delayed by the forest often had happened during the Eastern eamexantry of Bicloviash in the north (Leopold paign of 1915, the Germans designed to of Bavaria's force) and by the fringes of the create a salient, and then, with a Russian marshes in the south (von Mackensen). It army enclosed within it, to cut, on one flank was on the north, towards the main railway or on both, the communications by which line, that pressure was more threatening, that army could retreat. Von Scholtz took Biclostock on the 26th; Olita, a bridge-head of the Niemen, followed salient, and the Russians had to make good it next day; and a salient began to eneircle their escape from it before they could bend Grodno. The next move was with von their energies to the protection of the more Below, who began his attack on the Dvina dangerous Vilna salient: protection in such . line with an intensified thrust towards an event taking the form of holding off the Friedrichstadt (north) on the extreme left, enemy at the flanks and on the front while (Friedrichstadt is the only practicable cross- the main force slowly retired and the solient ing of the Dvina between Riga and Jacob- was slowly deflated, like a slowly collapsing stadt). But the pressure was nowhere re- balloon. Before the Vilna salient had been laxed. Von Eichorn was moviog on Vilna, created, and its possibilities exploited, the General Evert was still fighting rear-guard Russians had been compelled to extricate actions in the drier outskirts of the western themselves from the Grodno salient, and the Pripet marshes with Mackensen, and with process of evacuation went on while the Prince Leopold in the forest of Bieloviesh. greater attack was maturing on the Vilna In the distant south the attack on the Vol- sector. The Grodno salient was formed by hynian fortresses was begun by an advance the curve of the Niemen and by its tributary, of Bothmer and Pflanzer-Baltin on the the Meretchanka, and the district enclosed Russian positions on the Zlota Lipa, while is one of lakes and forests in which the Boehm-Ermolli, and a cavalry force under Russian talent for fighting rear-guard actions Puhallo, pushed towards Brody and Lutsk, was displayed to the best advantage. A rainy This advance on the south was not per- ten days at the beginning of September was mitted by General Ivanoff to develop except also not unfavourable to them, because, at considerable cost. On 31st August he though there were railways on two sides of counter-attacked vigorously near Lutsk, the salient, from Grodno to Petrograd, and taking prisoners and guns; but Lutsk fell from Mosty to Minsk, there were no railways

number of men than were now committed to Bochm-Ermolli on 1st September, and

A loss of greater magnitude was that of The fall of Brest-Litovsk, which was on the railway began. The German plan Grodno had been the apex of such a

penetrating into the heart of the positions. Thus the Russians were able to escape by successive stands on concentric lines, holding that of Mosty (south) through Skidel to the Meretchanka from and September to the 8th, and then falling back to a line farther east, between Mosty and Orany, covering the big railway junction of Lida, between the 8th and the 12th. The German captures from the evacuation of the salient were only 4000, numbers which were small in the circumstances.

The battle of the Vilna salient, which began contemporaneously on 2nd September, was a much more vital affair. The Russian front lay astride the railway from Kovno to Vilna behind Koshedary, across the River Vilia and along the River Sventa to Vilkomir. To the south it extended to Orany, where the Grodno retiring force supported it. When Grodno fell von Eichorn attacked the Russian position west of Vilna, directing the peak of his attack at a point just north of Meiszagowla, the village which gives its name to the battle. The Russians, knowing divisions of the Imperial Guard to defend it. Under the great weight of German artillery this position was at length carried by von Eichorn's left, and subsequently the Germans, advancing on 12th September, stormed von Eichorn's right had carried the important entrenchments which formed a barrier between two lakes west of Vilna. Vilna's fall became certain, and on the two following days a large force of German cavalry, sweeping round by Vilkomir, and making their way through the marshes along the railway from Shavli to Sventsiany, threatened the lines of retreat of the Vilna garrison.

Meanwhile, von Scholtz, on the southern side of the salient, was pressing beyond Mosty and Skidel, and was moving on Lida, Thus this advance, coupled with that of the battle of Meiszagowla, had by 12th September forced the Russians behind the Vilia. when he was methodically evacuating Vilna to break through. The cavalry was the

under cover of these reinforcements, he was threatened with a new danger. Some 40,000 cavalry, German and Austro-Hungarian, under von Lauenstein, accompanied by 140 guns, swept from Sventsiany up the Vilia River. They swarmed all over the region which lies in the triangle formed by the two railways from Vilna to Dvinsk and to Minsk. It was the Vilna-Minsk railway at which they aimed, and by 17th September they arrived at Vileika, just north of the railway junction of Moldecezno. There was a gap between the Russian army operating in front of Dvinsk and that falling back from the Vilna salient, and it was through this gap that the cavalry had been projected. At the same time they closed in southwards of Vilna, to a point half-way between Orany and the line from Vilna to Lida.

The situation of the forces in this salient thus became serious. They had only one good line of retirement, the railway passing through Moldecczno, and a great causeway road running south of it; for though the southern railway by Lida was still open, that this to be a key position, brought up two was not of much use to them, because they would get in the way of other Russian forces falling back eastwards before von Gallwitz and von Scholtz. Vilna fell on 18th September, an empty shell. But the greater potential prize was the Russian army re-Meiszagowia, and drove the Russians back treating from the town, and retreating under to the River Vilia. Before that had happened the threat of the loss of the Minsk railway to von Lauenstein's cavalry. From the 15th to the 19th the situation was precarious. To protect the retreat of the Vilna army the Russians had to fight a series of battles on their northern arm, along a line in a curvilinear parallel to the lines of retreat. These desperate Russian flank-guard actions were fought in front of Michelski, Smorgon, and Moldecezno; and Vidzy, which was captured by the German cavalry, was retaken on 20th September. Even on that day the situation remained critical, for the avenue of retreat, poor in roads and having indeed only one good one, was very narrow; the Lida railway was gone, the Minsk railway General Ruzsky, by this date released from threatened. But either the Russian resistapprehensions due to the Grodno salient, ance was too strong, or the cavalry too weak could reinforce his line; but on the 15th, without the help of the German artillery



northern prong of the pincers, and the arm, though long, was ineffective. The southern advance was slackening; in the south, where prong of von Gallwitz and von Scholtz was it had never set so strongly, it seemed already of sterner stuff, but it moved too slowly. to have turned, though the Russian line, The German commanders here forced their continually retreating during the summer, way past Skidel to Mosty, but they could now rested its extreme left on the west bank not force their way to Lida itself. They got of the Sereth, its flank protected by the as far as Slonin by the 18th, but that was not Dniester. On the 7th Mackensen was movfar enough. On the evening of the 20th the ing south of the Pripet marshes towards retreating Russians were 30 miles east of Sarny; Boehm-Ermolli and Puhallo's cavalry Vilna, and their flank-guards still held the were moving from Lutsk and Dubno towards railway. On the 21st the Russians struck Royno; von Bothmer was approaching Tarback, and retook Smorgon; and on the 23rd nopol, and Pflanzer-Baltin concentrating scattered the German cavalry around Vileika. in front of the Sereth line, It was this By the end of the month Vileika had been day and this situation that Ivanoff, comcleared: the Russian line had strengthened manding the southern group of Russian itself so as to run through Smorgon, south armies, selected for counter-attack. He of Novo Grodek, and the last of the great threw Brussiloff against von Bothmer, and salients had been successfully left behind. Lechitsky against Pflanzer-Baltin (8th). It may be noted as a significant fact that a Both the enemy commanders were taken fortnight before (15th September) Lord by surprise. Von Bothmer lost his heavy Kitchener had publicly declared that the guns; Pfianzer-Baltin was badly beaten Germans in the Eastern theatre had shot their bolt.

South of the great Vilna salient was that in which Evert's armies had been retreating from Brest-Litovsk. On 5th September the forces of Prince Leopold, having emerged from the forest of Bieloviecs, took possession of a passage through the marshes near Pruzany, on the Brest-Slonin road. Evert consequently withdrew his right towards the Zelianka River, keeping in touch with the retreating Grodno army. Meanwhile Mackensen was moving eastwards along the railway to Pinsk in the marshes, and he occupied that place on the 16th, the Russian rear-guards fighting an action in front of it. This army was, however, never in great danger; it could always retreat in good time. The army striking northward from Brest-Litovsk, and that moving eastwards from Grodno, were in a more difficult position. and had Leopold of Bavaria's pursuit been able to accelerate the pace, he might have been able to thrust in between them, and, by taking the junction of Baravonitchi, cut the communications with Minsk and got flung heavily back from Baravonitchi.

In the north, the flood tide of the German on the Sereth line; and in two days Brussiloff and Lechitsky captured more than 17,000 prisoners and 33 guns. Mackensen sought to relieve the pressure by an attack near Sarny, but effected nothing: and the successful Russian armies on the extreme south pushed the beaten Austro-Germans back to the River Strypa, Von Mackensen and Boehm-Ermolli sought to obtain compensation at Sarny and Royno; but only lost prisoners and machine-guns by their attempts; and in the last fortnight of September, Ivanoff continued his pressure on the northerly sector of his command. and recovered Dubno and Lutsk (23rd). This reaction, together with the other operations in which the Germans had shot their bolt, brought the great summer offensive of Germany to an end.

It was a campaign which, on the authority of General Ludendorff, then acting in the capacity of Hindenburg's Chief of Staff, and actually the most responsible strategist in the Eastern theatre at that time, was Germany's main effort in 1915. It was also a subject of complaint with Ludendorff that astride the railway running north and south von Falkenhayn and General Head-quarters to Lemberg through the marshes. In this would not agree to its further prosecution. the Germans failed, and Leopold's army was In order to see the Great War in right perspective this fact must be clearly grasped. burden of the resistance offered to Germany lecal action, such as Ivanoff developed taken by the French and British forces in the whole of the summer.

Ruse: was fighting in 1915 as the British and French were fighting in 1918. She lost 2.500.550 men, and though the Germans and forests of the northern sector.

Russia was called on to bear the greatest protection of marshes and difficult country. Dvinsk can be attacked only along the roads in that year, both because it was Russia leading to it; and, as the Dyina runs into the which was selected as the object of the Baltic at Riga, the line cannot be turned, as createst German effort, and because France the German fleet had found after its ineffecand Great Britain were not ready in the tive actions in the Gulf earlier in 1915. Von West to undertake any operations which Below's rush in August had carried him to could compare in seale with those that were. Friedrichstadt, but no farther, and von Eichdeveloped in Galicia, Volhynia, Poland, and orn in September had failed to get in below Russia. The numbers of prisoners taken Dvinsk. There was nothing for von Hinon both sides in these operations suffice to denburg in October but a frontal attack. demonstrate this assertion. A minor and He made a preliminary reconnaissance in force (25th September) before both Dvinsk between the Sereth and the Strypa in the and Riga, and on ard October began an attack first formical of September, captured over on an important scale with all the artillery 17,000 prisoners, a greater total than that he could get into position, and with a lavish of the greatest battle fought on the Western expenditure of men. Attacks were made, as Front in 1915, and almost equal (especially they had to be, in a series of thrusts someif prisoners captured in contemporaneous times contemporaneous, sometimes conseactions by the Russians are taken into ac- cutive, and usually costly. By the end of count to the entire total of German prisoners the third week in October no progress had been made, Ruzsky held Dvinsk, as Verdun was afterwards held, by a field army placed well in front of the attacked stronghold. The Germans then cut their Dvinsk losses,

which were great, and shifted the attack to failed ever to inflict irremediable disaster on Riga. The Russian defence followed the her armies, they diminished the Russian half-circle of the small rivers, the Aa and the appetite for fighting, and, to reverse the Eckau, the right resting on the sea near metaphor, sowed the germs of the hunger Kemmern, the left on the Dvina. Von for reace. It is to be noted that you Falken- Hindenburg's attack assumed two directions, hayn in his Memoirs hints that when you one an advance from Mitau north-east along Macl.cnsen's phalanx struck, the Germans the road to Riga; the other an advance knew the Russian moral to be low; though across the Dvina to turn the defence from whether due to Socialist propaganda or lack the south-east. For the latter advance he of supplies he does not indicate. At the had a starting-point at Friedrichstadt, where same time, the German victories were pur- von Below had secured ground on the chased at the expense of many of their best east bank of the Dvina. Thence the Gerfighting troops, and great as many German mans endeavoured to work down-stream efforts were later in the war, none was so to Riga. The first advance got as far as ample or so long sustained as that of which Olai, 12 miles from Riga, General Ruzsky's the Russians in 1915 were the victims. The defensive forces being gradually pressed back; summer campaign was over; but there yet the Friedrichstadt force, by 24th October, remained to von Hindenburg the possibility pushed up as far as Kekkern, which is still of a useful triumph if he could capture Riga, nearer the town. But here and at Olai the and free his troops from awkward positions, the advance stuck. The Germans could especially during the winter, among the lakes not get up enough heavy artillery to blast their way farther, and any other method of The front attacked was the line of the forcing their way forward was costly and out River Dvina from Riga to Dvinsk. Dvinsk of all proportion to the ground gained. On is a main-road centre, and is on the Petrograd the extreme left, attempts made in October railway. The Dvina line has the natural to move from Kemmern along the strip of guns and new and large forces, but after a In another engagement on the Strypa secweek's fighting the Russians, having given ground, struppled back again, and on 10th-11th November, with the aid of a flanking attack from the south, and a bombarding squadron of their ships shelling the Germans from the Gulf, won their way into Kemmern once more.

On the same day another German attack was begun at Bersemunde with the object of securing a crossing at Dahlen Island: but after temporary advances to points which could not be held, the attempts were abandoned as futile on 28th November. There had been vigorous fighting in the Dvinsk sector during this period; but here the offensive was taken by the Russians, who sought to turn the Germans out of Illutsk and the low hills which they had fortified on the western shore of Lake Sventen. General Ruzsky's forces drove the Germans from the Syenten bills during the middle part of the month, and forced the German flank at Tarnopol, north of Illutsk, on 24th tion, at Siemokowice (ard November), 5000 November. The Germans then abandoned prisoners were taken. There followed givethe salient. They had retreated from Kem- and-take fights which were magnified in mern, and on a line south-west of Riga, ten dimensions as the latitude decreased. Thus, days earlier, so that by the end of November while in the centre, where Evert was harrying any fresh attacks they made or sustained Leopold of Bavaria, they took on the aspect were a part of the usual modified activity of of raids, (though one of these raids on 20th a winter campaign. All hope of taking Riga November surprised an army corps headand Dvinsk had been abandoned by them quarters staff west of Pinsk and captured two for the year. The winter quarters of the generals), in the south, where Brussiloff and German forces in front of Riga might be von Linsingen were opposed, and on the uncomfortable from a tactical as well as a Strypa, where Lechitsky opposed von Bothpersonal point of view, but Hindenburg's mer, they resembled bloody and violent troops were too war-weary after six months soldiers' battles. Chartorysk on the Styr hard fighting to begin a new effort to improve changed hands, for example, on 18th October,

In the Pripet marshes the German advance slackened and stopped. In the region however, a strategic future to be considered.

land between the Aa and the sea were so south of the Pripet marshes Ivanoff mainunproductive that they were abandoned. In tained throughout October the ground he the centre the marshes so strengthened the had won, and continued to carry out a series Russian positions on the River Missa that of local attacks-still on that larger scale the Germans could not force them. On the which the battles in the West did not attain right the numerous attempts to cross the till a year later; though the difference in the Dvina had one brief success (28th October), conditions of country, of entrenchment, and when a lodgment was gained on Dahlen of munitionment must all be taken into ac-Island, only to be lost again. On 31st count in making such a comparison. In October Hindenburg tried another attack an action north of Tarnopol (22nd October) on the Kemmern-Baltic sector, with heavy he captured 7500 prisoners as well as guns,



15th November, and 10th November.

In the sectors farthest south there was,

From the Styr southwards the Austro-German armies were being strengthened with a view to influencing the dubious attitude of Roumania. On the Styr were the Fourth Austrian Army (Archduke Josef Ferdinand) the First Austrian Army (General Puhallo), the Second Austrian Army (Boehm-Ermolli), a German-Austrian army under Bothmer and the Sixth Austrian Army (Pflanzer-Baltin) stretching from the Dniester into the Bukovina. General Ivanoff rearranged his forces to meet this threatening concentration. Brussiloff's Eighth Russian Army faced the Archduke Josef and Puhallo on the Styr: Sakharoff (Eleventh Army) faced Boehm-Ermolli; a new Russian Seventh Army under Scherbatcheff was placed opposite von Bothmer; and Lechitsky, with the Ninth Army, watched Pflanzer-Baltin in the Bukovina.

Thus were the pieces set for a fresh Russian counter-offensive in the new year of 1916. They wisely selected as their sectors of attack those which were held by the Austro - Hungarian forces. These forces rendered great service-as cannon fodderto the Germans in the war; but they were not officered or commanded by military talent, or even by military efficiency. General Ludendorff, who had the best opportunities for gauging their capacity, has bitterly complained since the war of their instability, and has likened the Austrian alliance to a broken reed. What made their armies so untrustworthy, when opposed to ill-armed Russians, was that the component races who compulsorily fought under the Hapsburg flag did not know, in Ludendorff's phrase, what they were fighting for. In no army, except afterwards in the Russian army, when courage and patriotism had been poisoned, was the moral so bad.

That the Russian fighting-power should have endured so long, in face of unnumbered trials, losses, discouragement, neglect, and mismanagement, is one of the triumphs of the human spirit. Everything that could have wrung the Russian heart had been suffered by them since the battle of Tannenberg, where Russian soldiers had been slaughtered by the tens of thousand owing to the blindness of Samsonoff's staff and the criminal slowness of Rennenkampf,

whose dilatory negligence cost the Russians yet another victory in Poland. The Russian soldier had fought with his fists: he had faced Mackensen's artillery on the Dunajec without rifles or a second line of defence—yet another piece of negligence. The Intelligence Department of the Russian army, unless it was bribed to sell its countrymen, had forever dissipated the legend of the Russian spy system—but there is abundance of evidence that some of its members were quite willing to sell their country if they could. The Russian Baltic aristocracy were more than pro-Germans, some were anti-Russians, and the Russian Court was a mixture of folly and intrigue.

These abuses might have been survived, but there was nothing efficient outside the army; transport and the food-supply dependent on it were every day becoming involved in a more hopeless muddle. The Army Command kept itself clear of corruption, and the Grand-Duke Nicholas was strong enough and honest enough to weed out incapables. But even he was not beyond the reach of the "Dark Forces", as the corrupt and treacherous influences at Court were termed; and though he had the courage to threaten to hang the impostor Rasputin, who exercised so malign an influence at Court, he was not permitted to remain in the post where he could do most good for Russia. On 5th September the Supreme Command of the Russian armies was taken over by the Tsar, with General Alexieff as Chief of Staff, and the Grand-Duke Nicholas became Viceroy of the Caucasus. The Tsar's motives were not altogether mistaken. His assumption of the Chief Command was a token that he was above, and opposed to, the intrigues at Court which were directed to the acceptance of a German offer of peace. But the Grand-Duke had an influence in the army which the Tsar could not assume or inherit; he stood for efficiency, though he could not enforce it in either of the departments of munitions or supply. The Tsar stood for a bad system, and under the terrible medicine of war Russia was awakening to a realization of the disastrous inefficiency of the system.

Signs of revolt were apparent in the Duma

and in the newspapers, despite all the Censor September, and called for a greater measure could do. In Great Britain and in France of co-operation between the Allied forces. the Censor was more able, or the public more The figures of losses were enormous-they guilible, but in foreign newspapers, and in were not exaggerated. It was to be proved neutral countries, it was being said freely next year that losses are in the greatest degree at the end of 1016 that the time was coming dependent on the volume of heavy artillery when the Allies must choose between the fire suffered by troops. In 1915 the Ger-Russian people and the Russian dynasty. mans were better supplied than any of the In Russia the losses of the war of 1915 had Allies; and Russia was, except, perhaps, been felt most bitterly, and hardly less bitter Serbia, worst off. In 1916 this situation was the feeling, fostered by pro-German was to be changed, but in Russia, and among intrigue, that the French armies had not done the Russian armies, the mischief had been enough, "The French official communiqué done. The hundreds of thousands of Rusreports that the French have taken a tree", sians who had been lost numbered those was one of the bitter gibes in the Russian who believed in the Tsar and in Russia. military journal. On 7th November General Among those who replaced them were men Alexieff estimated that the Russian casual- in whom the doctrines of the extreme ties were over 2,000,000 to the end of Socialists were implanted,

CHAPTER IX

THE BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN THE WEST IN 1916

In the spring of 1916 the British army Mackensen so well against the Russian front tions. With water everywhere just below British. the surface, its trenches overlooked and water-logged, its approaches all observed the section lying between the Ypres-Coand mercilessly shelled, it was a trap in which mines canal and the railway. A heavy bomlives were always trickling away. In guns bardment on 13th February along a front and shells the British were slowly climbing held by the 24th, 50th, and 17th Divisions to an equality with the Germans, but equality was followed by the springing of a number had not been reached; in aircraft, though of mines and by a determined rush of Gerfrom this time the command of the air was man shock troops. The central point of announced as within our possession, the the attack was directed to a slight elevation greater versatility in finding new types was known as the Bluff, nearly all the garrison shown by the enemy, who experimented with of which, the 10th Lancashire Fusiliers, Fokkers, Halberstadts, and Rolands while our perished. The position was rapidly ocairmen remained hampered by machines cupied and put in order by the Germans, designed for inherent stability instead of for who from it could enfilade Sherwood Formanœuvring against speedier fighting ma- esters and South Staffords to right and left chines. The main German offensive of the of it, and compel a retirement of these spring was directed at the French lines round gallant but unfortunate troops with heavy Verdun, where they early put into operation losses. A desperate counter-attack failed to

in Flanders still stood on the defensive; on the Dunajec and the San; and this great and both in positions and in equipment attack lasted past midsummer. But they remained for several months at a disadvan- found men and opportunity for a number of tage. The Ypres salient still represented those localized attacks, in which their techall that was most horrible in military posi- nical ability served them so well, on the

The first serious one was directed against the battering-ram tactics which had served hold the lost position, and the attack, spread-

24th and 50th Divisions, caught them at a or bayonet fighting was of any use. So the disadvantage, but was eventually held by struggle continued during April all round them. The Germans remained in posses- the perimeter of the salient-costly, bloody, sion of the Bluff till and March, when a and disheartening. On 27th April the frontal attack, which was made by the 76th Brigade, and was strongly supported by a concentration of artillery, won back the lost position and held it against several renewed attempts of the enemy to recover it,

The remaining outstanding and typical incidents of the trench warfare in March were the protracted struggles for the minecrarges of St. Eloi, where the Germans occuried a useful little salient surrounding an clevition named the Mound. The 3rd Divsion, which had done so well in recapturing the Bluff, were given the task of assaulting the Mound, for the reduction of which a series of mines had been prepared as the preliminary to the assault. The mines vere ired in the dark of a March morning (27th) and the operation took the form of two finking attacks, entrusted to the 4th Royal and the 1st Northumberland Fusiliers. The Northumberland attack prospered entirely: the Royals were not quite an successful, and the operation remained, as it were, in mid-air for nearly a week, when by succesive efforts the 9th, 8th, and 76th Brigadeswon the position wholly and were able to gve it into the charge of the 2nd Canadian Division on 4th April, The advent of the new-comers served almost as a signal fe a renewed German attack. It was strong) supported and skilfully made on 6th April-st the moment when one regiment was eing relieved by another-and the craters were taken. Three were retaken in a Canadin counter-attack, and for two days the strugle went on, with heavy losses to both sides before there was a pause. The pause lasted fortnight, and then at St. Eloi. as well as in the Ypres-Langemarck road sector, the Genan attack on crater and on trench began oce more.

ing outwards to the front occupied by the become mud, and in which only bombing



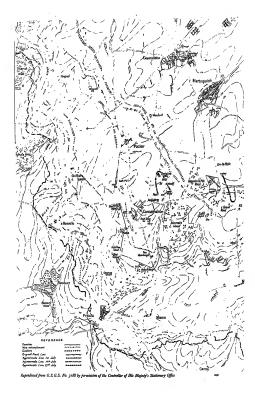
ter the relief of the French Army reglas Haig during the Battle of

Germans varied their operation by a gas-The severity and cost of this kind of attack on the trenches just south of Hulluch struggle may b measured by the fact that, held by the 16th Irish Division. Trenches though the attads were confined to so small were lost by the 19th Brigade, but were a front, the Canajans, for example, lost some retaken with the help of the 48th Brigade, 1000 men a weekn casualties. The fighting aided, too, by a shift in the wind, which went on in deep hols and craters which had demonstrated the dangers of asphyxiating gas to the assailants as well as to the assailed. A gas-attack of greater intensity directed against the Wulverghem sector on 30th April was felt as far back as Bailleul. By this time the anti-gas precautions devised by Lieutenant-Colonels Watson and Baker were sound and effective, but a continual loss of life and many casualties resulted from the gas, because it was impossible that always, and at all times, the men attacked by the fumes could assume their gas-masks in time.

During April and May of 1016 the British line was lengthened by 12 miles and extended in the following order from the coast to the with a better opportunity of prosecuting Somme: Second Army (Plumer) in the Salient; First Army (Monro) to Neuve Chapelle; Third Army (Allenby) to Arras; Fourth Army (Rawlinson) to the Somme, The enemy, persevering in his attempts to keep the British occupied, continually selected points of junction of armies for their attack, and displayed a very intelligent knowledge of the moments when units were being relieved. One such German attack was delivered on 21st May, between Monro's and Allenby's armies on the Vimy Ridge, south-east of Souchez: a greater one on 2nd June against the Canadians, whom General Byng now commanded in place of General Alderson. The Canadian sector, some five miles long, extended from Hooge to St. Eloi: and in the centre were Mont Sorrel and Observatory Hill, two positions of essential importance in the flat country. The attack began with one of those combined preparations of mine and bombardment in which the Germans were the masters, and the British the pupils, aptly but painfully learning the lesson. The mines destroyed a stretch of the trenches in front of Zouave and Sanctuary Woods held by Princess Patricia's Regiment; others levelled part of Mount Sorrel. The preliminary success assured by these explosives, joined to the heavy bom- something more than doubtul whether the bardment with which they were accompanied, was complete. The line was carried from stage of development and taining in which Mount Sorrel to Hooge. The gain, however, major operations of the kirl projected were lacked depth; it was less than half a mile; likely to be undertaken with sufficient the supports in Sanctuary and Zouave Woods success. So much is to be inferred from stood their ground; and from the evening of Sir Douglas Haig's cautius statement that and June to ard June the German invaders "the British armies weregrowing in numwere held and shelled.

They could not, however, be evicted from the trenches they had won by immediate counter-attack, and premature attempts proved costly of Canadian lives. It was a week before adequate local arrangements could be made, but before the first glimmer of light on 13th June the Canadians advanced again to wipe out the German victory in the Mount Sorrel sector. In this they were as successful as the first German effort had been. The line was re-established. It was imperative that it should be, since a broken position would have furnished the Germans their aim in this as in every local at ack, namely to derange Sir Douglas Haig's plans for the Somme offensive. The cost to the Canadians was high, some 7000 casualties from first to last: the German losser, deliberately incurred, may have been snaller. In these local operations the Germais left nothing to chance. There was a 3ritish local attack on the Germans on 30th june at Richebourg, and during the whole of the period under review, preliminary to the Battle of the Somme, night raids in order to obtain information and to hauss the enemy were incessant. Sir Dougla Haig in his dispatch of 20th December, 916, observes that the German operation did not succeed in interfering with his arangement for the Somme offensive.

The Somme battles were the irst emergence of the British army into aghting on the European scale of major operations, though this expression signifies no derogation from the vigour or intensit with which it had taken share in the battle of 1914, or in a year-and-a-half's defenive warfare. The defensive warfare of 105 had been linked with heavy offensive lows; but in all of them the enemy frontassaulted had been of comparatively smal extent. It is British army in July, 1916, 1ad reached the bers and the supply of muitions was steadily





sirable.

shield of the West; and despite the skill and inviting the British to come on. subtlety with which General Pétain econo- In a material respect they were not less losses.

increasing" but "a very large proportion of railways and tramways were laid down of the officers and men under my command to aid in the movement of this equipment; were still far from being fully trained". roads were built, causeways laid over marshes The longer the attack could have been de- and between marker; trenches of every kind, ferred the better would it have suited the from communication trenches to ways for expectations of the British Commander, underground telephones, were dug; gunwho, despite the exertions of Sir William emplacements, dug-outs, observation posts, Robertson-appointed Chief of Staff at the were constructed; wells sunk and pumping Wer Office a week before the principle of plants installed to ensure a good supply of compulsory service was adopted in Great water. The scale of the preparations may Britain (28th December, 1915)-never had be inferred from the circumstance that 120 the number of divisions he wanted. But miles of water-mains had to be laid. These the guns and shells had been coming in preparations were largely made under fire; freely, and there were several other con- in the conditions of warfare on the Western siderations which made an early attack de- front at this period no extended surprise was possible. The Germans were quite The first and chief was the situation at aware of the British intentions and prepara-Verginn. In front of Verdun the French tions: the only surprise that could be sprung had sustained an attack on either side of on them was such as might follow from a the Meuse, which had all the pressure and concealment till the last moment of the flank persistence that the Germans were capable where the blow would fall most heavily. of exerting. From the last day of February The German infantrymen in the front onwards the French at Verdun had been the trenches not infrequently displayed placards

mized men in holding the German flood prepared. The German position in the back, the French losses had been very heavy, Somme area was situated on the high unand on the east bank of the Meuse especially dulating ground which is the watershed their descrive lines had been pushed back between the French Somme and the Belgian almost to the inner ring of the fortress which, River Scheldt system. The watershed runs in tradition and in fact, was one of the gates east-south-east, and the hills fall into long of France. It was imperative that the irregular spurs divided by wide valleys to British armies should relieve this pressure the Somme. On the forward slopes of the by drawing the German forces elsewhere, hills the enemy's system of first-line defences even though the gains they might achieve ran from the Somme at Curlu to Fricourt. were incommensurate with the effort put northwards for 2 miles, westward for 4. forth, or the lives spent. Sir Douglas Haig, At Fricourt it turned north again, crossing after mentioning in his Somme dispatches the Somme's tributary, the Ancre; passing the situation in Italy and on the Austrian- over the summit of the watershed near Hebu-Galician front, as a second factor in putting terne and Gommecourt, and continuing forward the date of the Somme offensive, along the northern spurs to a point in front speaks of a third, namely the wearing down of Arras - another 6 miles in all. Along of the enemy forces opposed to the Allies. a 12-mile front between the Somme and the That was done, but it was at a cost that was Ancre a second system of defence, genernumerically not less than that of the German ally on the southern crests of the hills and from 3000 to 5000 yards behind the first. The preparations were of a character and had been constructed. In the two years extent which had become the normal neces- that the Powers had faced one another the sity in operations which were less like battles Germans had spent unending labour and all than sieges. Vast stocks of ammunition and their military skill in perfecting these destores were accumulated behind the front fences with interlaced trenches, bomb-proofs, from which the attack was to spring; lines and deep wire entanglements; the interthe foundations of fortresses by pits and quarries, cellars, and deep dug-outs; the territory between the successive lines of defences had been converted into a system of underground shelters and defences. These salients of the line had all been chosen with a view to enfilading fire; redoubts, machine - gun emplacements, mine - fields, observation-posts, had all been constructed with leisured mastery, so that it is correct to speak of the Somme defences not as one line, or two, but as a composite system from 2 to 3 miles deep. Behind the established lines others were always being added. layer on layer. The foremost lines could be seen and observed by the attack; the second system was only in a few places observable from the ground; air reconnaissance and aerial photographs alone could give its measure.

There was one, and only one, preliminary way of lessening the advantages which the strength of position conferred on the defence, and it was that of deluging it with shell. The British bombardment, delivered by a force of artillery far greater and heavier than any British army had heretofore possessed, began on the 24th of June, and lasted a week. The Royal Flying Corps, which was now equipped with a better kind of fighting-machine, carried out on 25th June a general attack on the enemy observationballoons, and temporarily destroyed the vision of these eyes of the defence. On 1st July, in broad daylight (7.30 a.m.), after an hour of intensive bombardment and the firing of a number of mines, the attack on the wide front began. The French co-operated by attacking simultaneously on either side of the Somme.

The chief attack was made by the Fourth Army of 5 corps, which, counting from north to south, Serre to Maricourt, were aligned, 8th Corps (Hunter-Weston) opposite Beaumont-Hamel; 10th Corps (Morland) on either side of the Ancre and opposite Thiepval; 3rd Corps (Pulteney) opposite La Boisselle and Contalmaison; 15th Corps (Horne) opposite Fricourt; and 13th Corps posite Montauban. The subsidiary attack carried Montauban before midday, and

lying woods and villages had been made was entrusted to the Third Army under General Allenby, but only one of his corps, the 7th (Snow), opposite Gommecourt, was engaged. This corps sustained one of the most severe checks of the attack, which prospered towards the south and failed towards the north from Thiepval, across the Ancre, and along the left flank of the attack. Here the Germans had massed their best troops to meet it, and the artillery preparation. smashing as it appeared to be by the standards of 1916, had not been sufficient to destroy the continuity of the German defences, and had left the Germans' ablest weapons, the machine-guns, if not undamaged, yet little deprived in the mass of their deadly properties. A consequence was that at many points of the British advance the infantry overran positions in the first burst of the attack only to find that they had not conquered them, and that a machine-gun nest which had temporarily sheltered in its deep dug-out, or in the undestroyed traverses, emerged to take the attackers in the rear or in the flank. Nor, again, had the British bombardment smothered the German batteries; counter-battery work was yet in an undeveloped stage, and the barrage on registered zones, which the Germans had put up after the attack was under way. isolated many advanced parties. As against these costly checks must be put the fact that in throwing all their weight into repelling the northern and centre portions of the British attack the Germans exposed their southern flank not only to the assault of the British 15th and 13th Corps, but also to the French, under Foch, advancing below the Montauban bend on either side of the Somme. If they had been as successful here in checking the Allied advance, the first days of the Somme battle would have been a costly reverse. As things happened it may be written down as a costly victory.

The French attack under Foch will find its description elsewhere; it was made on a front of 8 miles, thus bringing up the length of the front attacked to 28 miles from Gommecourt, beyond the Somme, to Dompierre. On the French left and on the (Congreve) in the bend of the Somme op- British right the 13th Corps (Congreve) shortly afterwards the Briqueterie to the east, and the whole of the ridge to the west of the village. This was the work of the 30th Division, raised originally from Manchester and Liverpool. On the flank of Montauban was Mametz, of equal importance if Montauban was to be held, and the fighting for this by the 7th and 18th Divisions was bitter. The assault had to charge over nearly a quarter of a mile of open ground, because the assault trenches had been levelled by the German fire. But by a happy combination of skill and determination the 7th Division forced its way into Mametz and reached the point assigned to it in the valley beyond. Conjointly with the occupation of the village a defensive flank was thrown out towards Fricourt. which occupied the same relation to Mametz that Mametz did to Montauban, and at the same time part of the 21st Division (15th Corps) got into the enemy's trenches north of Fricourt, so that the village was pressed on three sides (and was evacuated next day). Farther north the 34th Division at La Boisselle forced its way about the flanks of the village, but at a very great cost, and could not take the fortified position. The same observation applies to Ovillers, and these two strongholds, where the British losses were severe, and their gains hardly to be reckoned, mark the part where the successes of the advance faltered, and declined into failure. The 8th Division, which was associated with the attacks in this sector, had to be withdrawn next day, so severely had it been handled.

The farther north the narrative of the first day's attack progresses, the more tragic became the fortunes of the British assaulting divisions. The Thiepval salient, which was faced by the 10th Corps (Morland) with the 36th (Ulster) and 32nd Divisions, inflicted the heaviest losses on the assailants. The Ulster Division, attacking on either side of the Ancre, was directed towards Beaucourtsur-Ancre, on the northern edge of Thiepval. Its leading files penetrated 2 miles within the German lines and reached the Schwaben Redoubt, a point not to be attained again for months afterwards. Before this grim obstacle the attack was blasted, and few who set which attacked the salient on either side of

foot there returned alive. The division left half its numbers behind, and its fighting withdrawal was almost as great a feat as its advance. Its fate was typical of other assaults equally determined, equally fruitless. The assailants reached a point where they could not be supported, where their flanks were in the air, and where, in short, they were cut off.

The 32nd Division, North Countrymen and Highlanders, were on the right of the 36th, and, like it, went forward with a rush that carried it deep into the German defences, Highland Light Infantry rushing the Leipzig Redoubt, and the 15th Lancashire Fusiliers penetrating Thiepval-from which they never emerged. The Highlanders were able to hold on to part of their gains; the history of most other units was that of advances to positions which could neither be held nor abandoned. Each failure of this kind reacted on the exertions of other units to right or to left of it, because the position to which any unit attained was tenable or untenable according to the extent to which the attackers came under the flanking fire of machine-guns.

The 8th Corps (Hunter-Weston), with the 31st Division, 48th Division, 4th Division, and 20th Division (from Gallipoli) as supports, were the troops picked for the formidable task of assaulting Beaumont-Hamel. The task was beyond them. The Germans were too well prepared, and their defensive artillery, and, above all, their machine-guns, were disposed and directed with a skill and courage which made the display of similar qualities in the assailants of no avail. The epitaph on the assault is found in an expression of which Sir A. Conan Doyle makes use of in his history of the battle: "The 29th Division, which was on the right of the attack and nearest Beaucourt, rivalled in its constancy, and exceeded in its losses, its comrades on the Each of the divisions was too heavily hit to make it possible to renew the attack by nightfall. As complete as Hunter-Weston's failure to accomplish the impossible was that of the 7th Corps (Snow), the 46th and 56th Divisions of assault perished for want of weight and num- tained. bers. The attack on the south side of Gommecourt Wood passed three lines of on 2nd July to consolidate their conquest German trenches: it withered in front of of the first line of the German defences the fourth. The 56th Division, in which were a large number of London men, suffered very severely, and effected nothing beyond the sacrificial feat of drawing on themselves some of the best fighting material. and some of the heaviest artillery concentration of the Germans. They were, to use an expression coined by a French officer two years later, when the last efforts of Ludendorff fell on General Gough's army at St. Quentin, the " wing of sacrifice ". It seems, in a review of the day's work, that Sir Douglas Haig's estimate (Dispatch 23rd December, 1916) of the attack at Gommecourt, for example, " as soon as it was considered that the attack had fulfilled its object our troops were withdrawn ", is not very illuminating. The truth lies between that and the German description of it as a bloody repulse. It was a most costly method of warfare:1 and the best to be said of it is that at the time the British could find no better one.

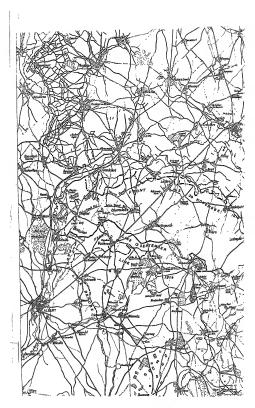
The decision taken by the British Commander-in-Chief at the end of the day was dictated by the evident impossibility of bursting a way through on his left flank, joined to the possibilities which opened out to him from the successes that had been gained by the cracks in the German line between Fricourt and Frise. Sir Douglas Haig remarks in his dispatch that he decided as his best course to press forward on a front extending from the junction with the French to a point half-way between La Boisselle and Contalmaison, and to restrict the offensive on the northern portion of his line to a slow and methodical advance. In other words, north of the Ancre no more was to be done than to hold the Ger-

1 The casualties of the day's fighting were little short of 50,000. The British took 3500 prisoners; the French 6000.

Gommecourt. The attack advanced over mans to their positions. General Gough soggy ground under cover of smoke. The therefore took over the 8th and 10th Corps leading units reached and passed the first opposite Beaumont-Hamel and Thicpval, German trench lines in spite of the fierce and General Rawlinson was left with the machine-gun fire that met them, but were 3rd, 18th, and 13th Corps to prosecute the then cut off from support by the German attack at the sectors where results commenbarrage between the lines, till the too weak surate with the effort made had been ob-

Rawlinson's 3 army corps began at once opposite to them, a task which occupied five days. The Germans, ever mindful of the value of pivot positions, strongly counterattacked at Montauban and the Briqueterie early on and July, but without noticeably retarding the British advance, which submerged Fricourt without opposition, and stormed Fricourt Wood and the farm north of it, during the afternoon and evening of the same day. During the next two days Bernafay Wood and Caterpillar Wood were captured, and the line advanced to the railway north of Mametz. La Boisselle, a point of essential importance, was very strongly defended by the Germans: three days were occupied in its reduction by the encircling pressure of 3 divisions. After its capture the assailants pressed into the outskirts of Contalmaison. With the capture of the four fortified villages, La Boisselle, Fricourt, Mametz, and Montauban, the first stage of the operations reached the partial objective of the attacks, namely, the conquest of a portion of the German first line, the defenders of which had here been pushed backa mile over a front of 6 miles and had lost about 6000 prisoners.

It now became necessary to relieve divisions which had been heavily engaged, and to readjust forces and artillery for a second attempt to blast a way forward. It was fairly evident at this date that no break through was in sight, and that nothing but systematic reduction of the enemy's positions held any promise of success. It was still hoped that the continual pounding to which the forces holding them were to be subjected would effect by successive blows what certainly could not be effected by any one stroke. however heavy, that the British forces could inflict. As the preparations for an attack on





harder to move. When the bulk of the wood to the gain. was taken at last, on 13th July, it was found line of the German defences.

on the right was the most menacing. The Its flanks were still to be dealt with, and it

great scale did not interfere with the con- artillery was shifted up, and a bombardment, inuous pressure at selected points north beginning on the 11th July, was made preof La Boisselle, the thrust towards Contal- liminary to an attack fixed for dawn on the maison began on the 7th. It lasted three 14th. But the more striking preliminary was days before its machine-gun defences were the moving up of the assaulting battalions silenced and the obstinate German counter- under the cover of darkness, over distances attacks were beaten back. A footing was averaging two-thirds of a mile to within rained in Ovillers on the same day that the striking distance of the German trenches. struggle for Contalmaison began, and with It was a manœuvre both delicate and hazarwhat extremity of effort that village was dous; but thanks to extremely good staffwrested from the Prussian Guard who de- work, and impeccable discipline and order, it fended it only the easualty rolls of the as- was safely accomplished, and the subsequent szulting battalions could indicate. It was course of the action of the 14th July is proof not till a night attack of the 15th-16th July that the Germans were without suspicion of captured the remnants of the garrison- it. At dawn, the line, which had lain for two German officers and 125 men-that hours without cover, rose to its feet and went the place was occupied. Ovillers was on forward after the barrage. On the right, the left of the line: Hardicourt and Trônes the attack entrusted to the oth Division swept Wood were on the right; and in Trônes through the last defences of Trônes Wood, Wood the German positions, and the Ger- releasing a small body of some 200 Kentishman determination to hold them, were as men who had maintained themselves alone stern as at Ovillers. A lodging was gained there for a day and a night. The position in Trones Wood on 8th July by one brigade, was consolidated, and nearly all of Longueval but this success was no indication of the village captured after a fight lasting till the strength of the position. The Germans evening. In the centre of the attack Bazencounter-attacked and drove the assailants tin-le-Grand village was taken by the 3rd back again, and each new attack seemed to Division, but only by hard fighting. The find the defence stronger and the defenders losses were heavy, but not disproportionate

On the left, the 7th Division took Bazenthat at least six German regiments had been tin-le-Petit village, and the 21st Division the used in its defence. Their defence had been wood. Both divisions took full advantage a feat of arms surpassed only by that of the of the surprise which had been risked, and stormers. The defences of Mametz Wood the capture of the village was accomplished gave hardly less difficulty. With these two with extraordinary swiftness. The retenwoods in British hands it became possible tion of it was a harder matter; and in the to arrange a concerted attack on the Fricourt wood the clearing up of machine-gun redoubts was expensive: but both village and The form of this attack was one on which wood were soundly held. When the con-Rawlinson's army could justly pride itself, sternation of surprise was over the Germans It was delivered against a front extending reacted, but their counter-attacks everyfrom Longueval through Bazentin-le-Grand where lacked their usual decision; and village to the wood of Bazentin-le-Petit, General Rawlinson, taking advantage of a which is north-east of Mametz Wood and disorganization of the enemy, employed a Contalmaison. Contalmaison Ville, on the means of enlarging his victory, unusual extreme left of the attack, had been secured, enough to draw special mention from Sir and with it protection for that flank, but the Douglas Haig, by sending in some cavalry general idea was to deliver a heavy blow at with the infantry to penetrate High Wood. the enemy's centre, and, having dented it 'The net result of the battle of the Bazentins heavily, to turn right and left, and deal there- was that the German second line had been after with the flanks, of which Delville Wood crushed in, though only over a 3-mile front.

was the effective way in which the Germans side while untaken. They could be slowly buttressed these flanks that made the task unceasingly hard for many weeks to come. A dent 3 miles wide was not enough to turn round in for the purpose of rolling up flanks.

Later in the war a theoretical relationship between the width of a break through, and the depth to which it could be pushed while the flanks held fast, was established. But on the 15th July, and subsequent days, Rawlinson strongly dug his way into the openings he had made. Subsidiary German strong points, which had been converted into awkward salients by the advance, were reduced; and after the last orchards of Longueval had been plucked of their defenders. Delville Wood on the right was captured, and the gains at Little Bazentin extended towards Pozières. The movement towards that village stronghold was aided by the activities of General Gough farther north. Gough had been entrusted to keep the enemy employed, and his troops about Ovillers interpreted the instructions as comprising an unceasing pressure on that place. On the 16th of July part of the German garrison surrendered, and on the following day the remnants of the village were rushed. From Ovillers an advance northwards and eastwards was made towards Pozières. The action as a whole was one of the most satisfactory of the constituent operations which made up the long battle of the Somme. It brought up the total of prisoners since 1st July to 10,000, and of guns to over 50. The French had also done well: their results were numerically better than those of the British; and at this time hopes were entertained that the hammering, the heaviest for two years that the Germans had sustained, was beginning to shake them.

But the narrowness of the purchase won on the ridge where the German line of defences lay could not be ignored. Rawlinson's troops had pushed their way into

reduced; but Delville Wood and Longueval, where the British line was thrust forward into a narrow peak of the salient, were yet more actively dangerous, From Delville Wood the plateau defences occupied by the German defences went north-east to Les Boeufs and Morval; thence south-east to Leuze and Bouleaux Woods. Before the British line could be straightened eastwards. therefore, Guillemont, Leuze and Bouleaux Woods had to be captured; and the importance of denying them to the assailants was perfectly understood by the Germans, who could neither be rushed nor taken by surprisc. It was important that, as the British right swung up, the French left north of the Somme should travel with it. The French Commander's objective was Sailly-Saillisel: the British Commander's, Morval, The French task comprised the capture of four fortified villages, and many woods in this country of plantations; and the conjoint advance could be made only by careful cooperation. Once again there was no possibility of a quick succession of hammer blows: methodical preparations had to be made for driving forward the steel-fronted boring drills to which brigade and divisional fronts might be compared,

Such operations were not conducted against a passively resisting enemy, but against one which lost no opportunity of counter-attack. The British had penetrated Delville Wood: two strong posts had not been captured, and on 18th July an attack. pushed by the Germans with all the energy of which they were capable, came to reinforce these strongholds. The Germans surged in great numbers through the wood, pressing back the British to the southern side, and threatening, by coming through, to take the British new line in the flank west of Longue-The British, therefore, now were val. forced into the role of defenders: and for a salient in which they were exposed to a a week to follow the struggle for this area of converging cross-fire that increased in splintered tree trunks went backwards and volume as the Germans recovered their forwards. This desperate give and take elasticity, and invited counter-attack. On fighting was typical of the conditions with the left flank were the villages of Thiepval which the operations had now settled down. and Pozières, elaborately entrenched, hard 'The moment of surprise was over, forces to take, and a poisonous thorn in the British approximately equal locally were pitted





CHARGING THROUGH CLOUDS OF POISON GAS

A daring raid by British soldiers wearing smoke-helmets

The British in the West in 1916

against one another, and surprise or success could be won only by superior skill or determination. A footing was obtained in High Wood on 20th July, and this line linked up with Longueval. But a general tentative advance on 23rd July, on a wide front, found the enemy well prepared with machine guns, and with forces skilfully established in shellholes in advance of his main positions; A simuland the attack was not pressed. taneous assault, delivered by the right wing of General Gough's army in the direction of Pozieres, immediately won ground, and was otherwise remarkable for one of the first appearances of the Australians on the pectations formed of them after what they had done in Gallipoli, and in the trench Western Front. fighting which followed the first rush laid the foundation of the reputation which they won from Germans, and from our Allies the French, as unsurpassable "shock," troops. Pozieres was completely captured on the 25th by English and Australian battalions,

Delville Wood and Longueval were finally and the position enlarged. taken on the 27th, and it then became imperative to extend Rawlinson's operations on the right towards Guillemont, and ultimately towards Ginchy, thus co-operating with the French. Guillemont, and Falfemont Farm to the south-east, were attacked on the misty morning of 30th July, while the The action French attacked farther south. was lost in the fog, in a double sense. Guillemont was entered, but it could not be held, and the attacks on the flanks were wasted, and many men lost. A second attempt on the village was made a week later, when the Germans were still better prepared, and again, though the frontal attack gained an entrance to the village, the flanks protecting it were not taken, and the attack failed. It became evident that while the capture of Guillemont was a useful preliminary to advance farther south, yet isolated assault on it, in order to succeed, would be too expensive. It was decided, therefore, to make its capture part of a general scheme in which the French were to combine, and which should embrace Maurepas, Falfemont Farm, Leuze, and Ginchy, with Guillemont in-

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cluded as a half-way house. The first attempt to put this scheme into execution on 16th August disclosed the difficulties, but two days later, with a thirty-six hour bombardment as a send-off, French and British went forward over a fairly-extended front. In the Guillemont sector the advance gained a footing in the outskirts of the village and The Germans reacted with violence three days later, but the gains were held, and farther ground was made to took the station. the north in front of Delville Wood, During the whole of August the sputtering fire of the battle to improve the positions which the British had won went on, with gains of a ridge and observation posts above Martinpuich, and progress towards the great fortifications of the Thiepval salient, near Mou-

All these operations were the preliminary to the moment when, with dangerous isolated quet Farm. obstacles removed, a push on a larger scale oustacies removed. The moment for it came on 3rd September, when the new thrust was made on a front extending from the junction with the French to the Ancre. The French attacked simultaneously. Guillemont, to the outskirts of which the British had resolutely clung, was stormed, consolidated, and passed, the stormers pushing on without a check to Ginchy. Ginchy Was seized, but a curcus to consolidated before the German counter-attack broke on it. The tenacity of the British would not yield it wholly, though most of their gains could not be kept. fight for it went on for several days afterwards. But the corresponding German counter-attack on Guillemont failed altogether, and those on Falfemont Farm, which also had been reached with a rush, were only Falfemont Farm's fortifications were captured piecemeal by temporarily effective. 5th September, and at the end of four days, fighting the British right had been advanced for nearly 2 miles to a depth of a mile, penetrating the German original second line of defence here, and, most important of all, breaking at last a barrier which had been maintained for nearly seven weeks against its assailants. A thousand prisoners were The success was rounded off by a caretaken.

to the north of Leuze Wood. The crack problems; and that to be solved by the which had been opened a few days before French was, if anything, the harder because spread. Ginchy was triumphantly passed and the line advanced east of Delville Wood and High Wood. The French had been no less successful, the thrusts mutually aiding one another. Their line had been brought to a point just south of Combles, to Le Forest and to Clery on the Somme, so that the exposed salient in the Allied lines had disappeared, and the necessary space for wider operations gained. The whole of the forward ridge from Delville Wood to Mouquet Farm, over 5 miles, was now in British hands, and east of Delville Wood to Leuze Wood the positions on the main ridge were firmly established. The French were advancing across the Combles valley. These successes, though the cost had been severe, were significant not merely of the new-found strength of the British fighting arm to meet and defeat the enemy, even when the Germans had the very great advantage of ground and of scientifically chosen and prepared defences, but were indicative, from the course which the operations had followed. that the ability of the German soldiers to stand up to punishment was declining. This was shown also by the frequent failure of the counter-attacks. Nevertheless, the soundness of the German engineering was such that no quick collapse could be expected. On the flanks of the enlarged gap into which the Allied forces were driving were many positions which promised to demand as much sacrifice for their reduction as any vet conquered.

From Ginchy the crest of the rolling plateau runs northwards for more than a mile before throwing out a 21-mile spur eastwards, towards Morval. The spur dominates a wide field of fire. Leuze Wood, in the British hands, was distant from Morval by more than a mile of valley, and the valley was commanded by the spur. High ground, north and east, also overlooked the approach, and it was to this that the French were working. Their point to be reached was Sailly-Saillisel, and the valley in which the little town of Combles lies. Between the French and British objectives Morval and Sailly-

fully considered attack on Ginchy, as well as Saillisel both presented extremely awkward of the narrowness of the approach. The task could only be performed by a very accurate parallel advance. "Unity of command is usually essential to cope with such a situation "-the observation is Sir Douglas Haig's. The substitute for it was cordial good-will between the Allied armies and their eommanders. Precedent to combined action was the improvement of the British position on its left flank towards Thiepval, where General Gough's right-hand corps plodded methodically forward. The Thicpval work, immensely strong, had presented too costly an undertaking, if stormed in July, but by process of slow reduction it was now ripe for capture. On the 14th of September a forward system of defences, known as the Wonder-work, was taken, and the way was then clear for rushing the main position without severe loss.

> A heavy bombardment had been in progress since the 12th, when the main assault began on the 15th. The plan of this attack was to pivot on Gough's army south of the Ancre and north of the road from Albert to Bapaume, while Rawlinson's Fourth Army struck at the remaining system of German defences between Le Sars and Morval. If this thrust prospered the attack was to spread leftwards towards the Ancre so as to take in Martinpuich and Courcelette: and if, again, this went well Gough would bring the left over the Thiepval Ridge. The French share in this attack was to pressup beyond Combles. so as to clip it in one arm of a pair of pincers. while at the same time getting nearer to Sailly-Saillisel. The results could not be effected at one blow. The foregoing plan contemplated continuous operations over a considerable period. The first assaults on 15th September succeeded to the level of expectations. They were assisted by the appearance for the first time of the new weapon, the Tanks,

The Tanks were then in their infancy; the methods of handling them were being learnt, and before their ascendancy was established they encountered many vicissitudes and a number of failures. But on

15th September they had all the advantage of surprise. They led the way into Flers, followed by troops which cleared the village and went beyond it. On the right, Rawlinson's attack got to striking distance of the German line Morval - Les Boeufs - Guedecourt. On the left, the treacherous High Wood, the grave of so many brave men, yielded at last, though a high price of gallant men's lives was exacted for its capture. These advances made the way clear for the contemplated extension leftwards; and Martinpuich and Courcelette were taken by the right wing of Gough's army. The completion of the advance involved three days' more hard clearing up, but by the 18th the Quadrilateral, a strong German work blocking the road to Morval, was captured and the success thus rounded off. This victory over a 6-mile front was the most productive of any one assault since the operations begun in July. It added six square miles, three villages, two lines of defence, and 4000 prisoners to the account. The fighting, though hard, was less costly to the British than hitherto.

There was a week's pause, due in part to unlucky weather, before a renewed bombardment struck the hour on 25th September for the exploitation of the gains from Martinpuich to the Somme. The British were to take Morval, Les Boeufs, Guedecourt, and the country north of Flers stretching to Martinpuich. The French were to push to Rancourt and Fregicourt. The programme was carried out according to plan, except at Guedecourt, where a trench full of Germans, who stood to their defences with unflinching determination, brought the advance to a standstill. The French, by their capture of one village and their grip on the other, had joined with the captors of Morval to encircle Combles, which next morning was entered simultaneously on either side by British and French. It was strongly fortified, though it had never had the opportunity of displaying its powers of resistance. On the same day Guedecourt was cleared up in rather a remarkable way. The commander of the battalion which had been held up sent for a Tank, which, coming up, started down the portion of the belli-

gerent trench followed by bombers. Germans could not get out at the southern end, and were thus compressed as by an irresistible piston. An aeroplane soared above the trench, machine-gunning its occupants. The combination was too much for them, and the Germans surrendered to the aeroplane by waving white handkerchiefs Some 370 survivors of the trench were captured, and the British casualties

The second part of Sir Douglas Haig's amounted to fivel plan, namely the attack by Gough on the left of the position, where the buttress of Thiepval barred the way, could now be begun. Before the enemy could recover from the effects of the blow struck by the Fourth Army, the Fifth Army launched an attack against Thiepval village and ridge (26th September). The German position, consisting of the fortified village, and the three connected redoubts, Zollern, Stuff, and Schwaben, was the typical field fortress. At an earlier stage of the operations it would have proved impregnable; and its capture, even at a moment when the German moral was shaking, deserves the adjective "brilliant", which Sir Douglas Haig applied to the performance of Gough's divisions. The attack succeeded most swiftly on the right of the position. In Thiepval, in Mouquet Farm, and in the Zollern Redoubt the Germans held on in their sunken defences till they were bombed out. Mouquet Farm was carried by the third storming wave early in the afternoon; its cellars were not emptied of Germans till sunset. Into Thiepval village some Tanks ploughed their way, but the bombing and rooting-out processes continued all night, and till broad daylight of next day, before the whole village was purged. The sixteen hours' fighting not only won the stronghold, but some 2000 prisoners. The integral parts of Stuff Redoubt and Schwaben Redoubt were taken on the 27th. The Fourth Army, continuing its pressure during this more concentrated operation, carried another portion of the fourth German line of defence, north-west of Guedecourt, throwing back the defenders on to the defences of Eaucourt, L'Abbaye, and Le Sars.

behind the quicker advance, and was gaining heights accuracy and imparting confidence Le Sars fell on the 7th of October, during the pro- his pressure on the western flank, and took gress of operations designed primirily to advantage of a spell of October enspness to aid the French in their approach to Sailly- put in a left-handed blow at the trench Saillisel The advance could not go on system of the Schwaben Redoubt and its without pauses, for the September rains were environs. Again a gratifying profit was made making the difficulties of getting up the at a small expenditure. The infantry took artillery extreme. But every time an attack, all the points assigned to them, and 1000 could be sent forward it gained ground and prisoners as well. These operations were took prisoners. Nearly 1000 were taken preliminary to an attack on a greater scale at on 7th October in the attack on Le Sus, and a moment to be chosen when weather again in the corresponding thrust on a spot south- permitted a choice. Meanwhile, another west of Le Transloy But as the enemy began attempt was made to achieve some substanto lose his hold on the whole ridge between tial progress towards the Sully-Saillisel the Ancre and the Tortille, his efforts to re- heights and the St. Pierre Vanst Wood, which tain what he still preserved of the high ground was the watch-dog of the position. Some above Thiepval and Saillisel became more ground was made on 23rd October, and again determined Especially did he struggle hard on 5th November, the British pushed a little in the Thiepval area, where the ridge north farther along the Le Transloy spur, a netof the village carried with it observations of work of trenches which had held up both all the positions in the Anere valley and his French and British where the forces joined counter-attacks were persistent

It suited the British commander best to hold tight to what had been gained here, and along the sector from Le Sars to Guedecourt, assaults which gained nothing and regained counter-attacks nothing But on the British right the Ger advanced village fortresses covering Bapaume They were also digging themselves in as and it became desirable for the British to

The British line was now again in move- almost impassable to lorries or other vehicles ment, rolling slowly onward as the Germans of supply Progress was made, the French withdrew in order to straighten their line, got a footing in the twin villages of Sullyand by the aid of October Eaucouit and Sullisel, the British neht now edged forward L'Abbaye, not without a struggle, were eastwards, but it was becoming dolefully taken, and the approaches to Le Sus com- evident that the weather would not clear up manded The artillery was coming up well in time for the big attack to be made on the ı

While waiting, Sir Douglas Haig renewed was also cleared up The chief object, however, was not attruned The enemy had here peen afforded time in which to stiffen his troops and bring his defences up to the preallowing the Germans, in their own phrase, July standard. So far from laying himself to bite on granite, and expend men on open to be rushed, he was again launching

It was clear by this time that, apart from mans were still strongly sited and entrenelied some meteorological miracle, there would about Le Transloy and Beaulencourt, the be no opportunity of a quickly-exploited success in this direction. A better opportunity offered on the Ancre, where the Gerhard and fast as circumstances permitted, mans were still unsteady from the loss of positions and prisoners Even here, howinterrupt these operations before they had ever, no wide-fronted attack could be proprogressed too far, and while there remained jected, because the prospects of consolidating opportunities of rushing them A condition any ground won under pouring skies and precedent to complete success was the pos- shortened days had to be taken into account session of Sailly-Saillisel and its heights and. Nor had the Germans been idle in the four defences and, unfortunately for the carrying months which had elapsed since the British out of an ideal plan, the weather again broke, assault recoiled from in front of Benucourt flooded the shell-pitted fields and hard-used and Beaumont-Hamel they had fortified and roads, and made the ground so lately won refortified their lines and village strongholds,



PIPERS LEADING A CHARGE



The British in the West in 1916

and had introduced an additional division to reinforce the garrisons. But on 13th November, after four fine days which had hardened the ground a little, and after two days of concentrated bombardment, Gough's troops attacked on both sides of the Ancre. They went forward in a thick mist, and south of the river they met with a success which was remarkable alike for its rapidity and for the smallness of the cost. Before it was light the assailants had gone past. St. Pierre Divion, and had hemmed in its garrisons between the village and the river. Many Germans hastily fled to their dug-outs, and the attacking battalion soon had more prisoners than its own number. The village soon fell: in all 1400 prisoners were taken there, at a cost of 600 casualties in the division which had been entrusted with the iob.

The fight on the other side of the river was a much more sanguinary business. Parts of the German line gave way, but parts refused to budge, and fought to the death where they stood. Yet the main British attack was able to get on. The troops close to the Ancre pushed on so far that they got out of touch with their supports and with the division on their left. But they dug themselves in as best they could, and held on there all day and through the night. Towards Serre on the other flank, to the north of the river attack, the troops could not get over the heavy ground before the fire which opened on them compelled the abandonment of their attack. In the centre Beaumont-Hamel was taken by Scottish troops, and the outskirts of Beaucourt were occupied by the Royal Naval Division. Next morning the attack jumped off at once from its coigns of advantage, for the Germans had made no attempt at reaction. The whole of Beaucourt was carried, and

the line was pushed forward so extend to the north-west along the Beaucourt road, across the southern end of the Beaumont-Hamel spur. On succeeding days more of the spur was carried. Such is the story of the best blow at the German lines which the weather of 1916 permitted to Sir Douglas Haig; it had secured command of the Ancre valley just where the river enters the enemy's lines, and had added 7200 prisoners to a total which, since the Somme battle began, had risen to 38,000, including 800 officers. The guns in the same period numbered 29 heavy, 96 fieldguns, 136 trench mortars, 514 machineguns.

In reviewing the period covered by what is known as the Somme Battle, Sir Douglas Haig remarked on the steady deterioration in the moral of the German troops under the continued hammering to which they were subjected. He said, also, that despite the abandonment by the Germans of the Verdun offensive (which it had been one of the objects of the Somme Battle to compel), the numerical strength of the Germans in the West was greater in November than in July. The British attack had been made by troops the vast majority of whom had been raised and trained during the war; many counted their service by months. The results gained were on that account remarkable. It is impossible, however, to remark them without the further consideration that had their commander been able to wait longer, and give to them better training, and, moreover, had he been able to pause till their numbers were considerably augmented, the success would have been more striking. The task laid on them in attacking such formidable strongholds held by the best instructed army in the world was too heavy, the handicap too severe.

CHAPTER X

VERDUN AND THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN OF 1916

PART I

In the latter portion of the dispatch in which Sir Douglas Haig describes the operations of the Somme Battle and the results it achieved, both in relieving the pressure on the French at Verdun, and in pinning the Germans definitely down to the whole Western Front, he pays a tribute to the part taken by the more westerly sectors of the British armies from Ypres to Albert in conducting during the whole of the four months' battle their daily task of raiding, demonstrating, and, one may add, enduring. The whole line from Nieuport to the Somme had experienced the arduous duties since the beginning of the year, and especially in the months before the Germans showed their hand in their great assault at Verdun. The plan was von Falkenhayn's, and it was engineered with the intention of exploiting to the utmost the advantages which the heaviest possible concentration of artillery could achieve.

Before the attack began, the Germans masked their intentions by a number of attacks on points of the line where salients, or the general lie of the ground, would favour the interpretation that here (or there) was the point chosen for their supreme effort. Thus, from the beginning of the year, feelers were thrown out; minor attacks, planned as if to sound the possibilities of major ones, were made on the Yser, at the Hohenzollern Redoubt, at Hulluch, at Vimy. Where the French had halted in front of the Butte de Tahure, and at other salients of their Champagne line, the Germans probed them, and often thrust forward an attack with considerable energy, and sometimes with success. South of the Somme, and as far along the line as Alsace, the attacks appeared to test the defences, and conceal, or reveal, an intention. As a fact, Verdun, which lies across one of the historic routes of the in-

the continuity of the French line, had long been chosen by the Germans for their colossal blow, the elements of which were the artillery concentration and the succession of attacking divisions, each division being withdrawn after its work was done.

Verdun, Belfort, Toul, and Epinal were the four fortresses on which French armies, defending the country from an invasion from the east, would base themselves. Verdun was fortified at the beginning of the war by an outer line of forts, with batteries pushed out in a circuit of 30 miles; and with inner redoubts. The forts were modern according to pre-war standards, but the reduction of Liége and Namur, not to speak of the Russian fortresses, by the German-Austrian siege artillery, made them palpably obsolete; and the first year of the war was spent in enlarging the perimeter of the defences. The long struggle in 1915 for Les Eparges, on the heights of the Meuse overlooking the plains of the Woevre, while it did not enable the French to extinguish the St. Mihiel salient below Verdun, was valuable for its effect in extending the lines of the French fortress. The old town of Verdun lies deep on the Meuse. North of it, and west of the river, low hills begin to rise, the chief of which is the Charny Ridge. The Charny Ridge is dominated by other hills farther north, Hill 304, Hill 295, Hill 265. The French lines, pushed well beyond these while General Sarrail, in 1915, had charge of the field army based here, were at their farthest o miles north of Verdun. On the eastern side of Verdun the heights

often thrust forward an attack with considerable energy, and sometimes with succless. South of the Somme, and as far along land, some 5 miles broad, which is cut by the line as Aksec, the attacks appeared to raines indied no by the thick woods of beach test the defences, and conceal, or reveal, an intention. As a fact, Verdun, which lies Below the tuble-land is the flat plain of the across one of the historic routes of the im-lowers, clayer and water-logged in wintervaders of France, and in the possession of "The line of trenches which run from the which an enemy would entirely disorganize Region coast to the Swiss border, after pass-

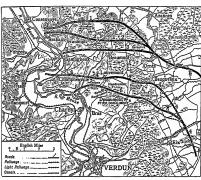
ing through the Argonne, bent north-eastwards towards Forges, and ran downwards from Forges into the Meuse. After crossing the river the line went through Consenvoye, Brabant-sur-Meuse, and Caures Wood towards Herbebois and Ornes, where it was among the Meuse heights. Leaving the heights it struck south-eastwards through the plain of the Meuse to Fromezey and Fresnes-a salient in the Woevre. Thence coming back to the heights it was continued by the western side of the St. Mihiel salient. From Forges to Fresnes this line defined the outermost defences of Verdun. The first inner line, reading in the same direction, was based, in respect of the eastern side of the Meuse, on Samogneux, Beaumont, Fosses Wood, and Bezonvaux. The second inner line went through Bras, Douaumont (fort), Hardaumont (wood), Vaux (fort), and Eix. Between the first and second of these lines positions had been prepared to reinforce mutually the irregular hills between successive lines of defences, as well as the key heights.

The whole area had been converted into a magnified fortress by labyrinthine communications, concealed gun-positions, and what might perhaps be denominated as the French version of the German Hindenburg lines. The weakness of Verdun as a modern fortress lay solely in the fact that these outer lines had not been pushed out so far eastwards as to render the Verdun bridges over the Meuse, and the supplies brought by rail thither, immune from long-range guns. All the Verdun area east of the river had to be supplied across the bridges. If any attack had proved overwhelming the disaster would have been irreparable to a defending army, which would have been jammed hopelessly against the Meuse without sufficient means of retreat. The French had greatly reduced the possibility of such a debacle by the ingenuity and multiplication of their defences, and had organized a system of motor transport to supplement or supersede railway supply. They could not, however, with their lines situated as they were, deprive the Germans of the heavy-gun positions at Ornes or above Forges, or of their advantages for massing men unperceived in the woods north such as in the last few days before the

of the trench lines. Thus, though it was impossible for the Germans to conceal the flow of their forces eastwards, yet they were able, aided by their admirable system, to mass both men and guns for a sudden and very heavy blow in a sector which could hardly have been made impregnable to such an order of attack. The sector they selected embraced the 7 miles of French front from Brabant-sur-Meuse to Herbebois, which was held by 3 divisions of the French Third Army (General Humbert). Against this force the Germans had echeloned 14 divisions. (Von Falkenhayn, in his Memoirs, states that only 17 or 18 divisions were at first available for attack. Nine of these were needed for the main attack on the east of the Meuse, and others had to stand by for relief. There were not enough to attack on both banks at once.).

The first shock of the attack was undertaken by a striking force of 3 army corps on the line from the Bois de Haumont to Uzannes: the corps being the 18th, 3rd (comprising Brandenburg shock-troops), and 15th, with a Bavarian division. From the Bois de Haumont to the river at Consenyoye was the 7th Army Corps, with reserve divisions, and, on the eastern side of the hammerhead, beyond Uzannes towards the Woevre. were the 5th Army Corps, a Bavarian army corps, and a Landwehr division. Each division had less than 2 kilometres of front to attack (von Falkenhayn). means of bursting a way through, on which the Germans first relied, was not that of massed divisions, but of massed guns, almost wheel to wheel, and reinforced by the blast from 13-inch and 12-inch guns of position in the woods of Forges and Spincourt, and the heights of Ornes. The supply of ammunition exceeded the quantity which all previous experience seemed to prescribe (von Falkenhayn). The Germans added effectiveness to their surprise by omitting the long preliminary bombardment, and by substituting for it a concentrated burst of fire which lasted but four hours. The French first-line defences melted in the intensity of this outburst as in a lava flow; and no preparation for it,

morning of 21st February, on which it system in the Haumont and Caures woods, broke forth, could in any way cope with it though the flanking pillars of Brabant and or suppress its violence. No counter battery Herbebois were held against them, and the work was effective, for the morning was thick French expended some gallant lives in a and raw, with bad visibility, and the Ger- counter-attack which gained a little time man troops in waiting had nothing to do for retreat. Retreat was quickly perceived but to walk over the demolished positions, to be inevitable by the French Head-quarters The French poilus who had not been Staff. But another day (22nd) intervened



Map showing the Various Stages in the First Phase of the Attack on Verdun

The German attack on the French lines at Verdun began on the east side of the Meuse at dawn on 21st Febru 1916. The most northerly line drawn on the map shows the French position at the time of the German onset. The other lines show the successive positions taken up by the French as they were forced back on 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 25th February. On Friday, 20th February, the final adjustment of the French line in the first phase of the struggle east of the Meuse took place. It crossed Poivre Hill and Dougsmont Plateau

course but to fall back to their support lines.

The support lines had not the durability or powers of resistance of German supportadapt itself to their construction or maintenance, and the Germans, more methodical in attack as in defence, had left nothing to

killed, wounded, or isolated, had no other before the first line was definitely abandoned, the French troops selling their lives for the twenty-four hours' respite: and on the 23rd the line Samogneux-Herbebois was adopted as another temporary expedient while preing defences; the French genius does not parations were made by the French to draw in their line from the Woevre. On the night of the 23rd-24th the French withdrew their outposts on the Woevre and contracted chance in their arrangements for occupying their line within the limits Champneuville and consolidating the positions which they (Meuse), Louvemont, Bezonvaux, and the had won. They early carried the trench foot of the heights of the Meuse. This

On the morning of the 25th the French stayed. line was a little in advance of this, and was

them no farther. Petain's reserves, which had come up during the ridge, and Hill 204, south-west of it after

contracted line could perhaps be held while the hard fighting of the day before, were at a stronger inner position was rectified and once sent in, and a perfectly-timed counterattack, by men of Balfervier's 20th Corps, The Germans perceived the importance threw back the Germans and prevented the of pressing on faster, and threw in their leak in the defences from being widened by men with new rapidity, so that on the any inrush of Germans through it. This 2.1th they flowed round Beaumont and its counter-attack marked the end of the first encircling woods, and at Louvemont and phase of the attack. The limits of success Bezonwaux were perilously near the inner attained by the German surprise were dedefensive position chosen by the French, fined, and the attack on the Verdun defences This was sited on the Talou Ridge, inside was bound theneeforth to take the form of the bend of the Meuse here, the Poivre a siege, in which either combatant knew Ridge, and then ran south of Louvemont what the other would attempt, and how far past Haudremont and Dougumont, through the attempt would carry him. Von Falkenthe wood of Hardaumont to the edge of havn's comment is that violent French the hills at Vaux and its ravine. Its left counter-attacks began, and the German was project on the Meuse at Vacherauville, forward movement in the heights was

On the 27th and 28th the Germans sought bent out to protect the two keys of the to find a weak point in the contracted French position, the Poivres Ridge and the Douau- lines on the east side of the Meuse, at Fresnes, mon: plateau, in which stood the village, Eix, and at Manheulles, on the Woevre front. the redoubt, and the fort. The German But the weather and the sodden state of the attacl: converged on these two points. The Woevre roads and fields made assault from uttack on the Poivre Ridge failed: it was that side, at that time, difficult.- It is not the less purposeful assault. That on Douau- improbable that the weather which, after a mont prezsed up from wood and glen, by spell of dryness and sunshine, relapsed into path and ravine. The greatest and most winter conditions, was partly responsible for persistent sacrifice was made to win past the failure of the Germans to exploit a flank the edge of the plateau: but on the 25th, attack on the eastern side of the French at any rate, the German efforts could carry defences. While preparing for the development of a new attack on the Douaumont This stand of the French was of great position they transferred guns and ammuniservice to the defenders and to General tion from Spincourt to Montfauçon, on the Pétain, who had been placed in command, western side of the Meuse, where, accordand who still awaited reinforcements. These ing to von Falkenhayn, they already had arrived on the 26th, and were thrown in at some pieked assaulting divisions in readiness the critical stage of the battle for the position to test the Verdun defences. West of of Douaumont. On this position the Ger- the Meuse the French lines ran through the man assault, narrowed to a 2-mile front, Avocourt, Malancourt, and Montfauçon converged with all the weight that could be Woods, 2 miles south of the Montfaucon thrown in, and was pressed in successive heights. Thence they covered Bethincourt, waves. The picked troops of the 24th and the marshy Forges brook, which runs Brandenburg Regiment at last burst their at the foot of the succession of ridges and way into the French trenches at the Fort heights that became household words in of Douaumont, between the village and the 1915 for their connotation of struggles for redoubt, and this feat was at once telegraphed their possession which went on for weeks. all over Europe in the message: "Douau- The main ridge, Côte d'Oie, the Corbeaux mont, the eastern pillar of the Verdun de- Wood, nearest the Meuse, the Cumières fences, is solidly in German hands". It Wood behind it, the two heights of the Mort was in German hands, but not solidly, for Homme (Hills 205 and 265) on the west of elsewhere. It was decided to go on. The bank.

A hombardment of four days' duration led the way to the first attack on 6th March, before which the French fell back to their prepared positions behind the Côte d'Oic. cover for a massed attack on the hill, which, The Germans reached Regneville, in the loop of the Meuse, by nightfall, and gained part flanking the Mort Homme and the Côte of the Corbeaux Wood next morning. The d'Oie defences. The attack of the 20th, struggle swaved backwards and forwards in attacks and counter-attacks till 14th March. with the net result that the French had everywhere fallen back to their second lines, holding tightly to Bethincourt, where the next tactical thrust of the Germans was to be anticipated. Meanwhile, the larger scale attack on the Douaumont sector, east of the Meuse, was in abeyance, and was replaced by persistent small attacks designed to test the French defences and to prevent any crumbling of the German gains.

The first attempt to crush in the Côte d'Oie lines was made on 14th March, and took the form of an attempt to seize the western pivot of the defences, the Mort Homme. The main hill (Hill 205) has an outlier (Hill 265). The attack was made on the whole of this position, and, as usual, made a small but perceptible gain at a cost which seemed disproportionate at one point, namely the slopes of Hill 265. The gain was magnified in the German reports, and was not greatly improved by another attack two days later. On that day also an attack on the Vaux sector, on the other side of the Meuse, was repelled. By the middle of March the new character of the German attack became established. And there was no longer any probability of surprise: the French lines were organized for resistance as the German machine was organized for attack: it remained only to be It was up these ravines that the German seen whether German persistence and weight attacks were cleverly and persistently pushed,

a gap, constituted the first French battle could exhaust French elasticity. The Gerpositions, mutually protective. If all were mans reconstituted their forces for the new carried the French must fall back on the trial of strength, and brought up what may Charny positions nearer Verdun. We learn be called their siege army to 244 divisions. from you Falkenhayn that some doubt was which, with their attendant artillery, were felt at this time as to whether the attack disposed over a front of 25 miles, or roughly should be broken off at Verdun and renewed 20,000 men to the mile-a formidable threat. They renewed their attempts on the western Crown Prince retained his command, but defences on 17th March with a three days' von Gallwitz was put in charge on the western bombardment; and on the 20th delivered their first attack, which was the prelude to the assault on Hill 304, towards Avocourt Wood.

Avocourt Wood provided the necessary if taken, would be the first step to outskilfully made and reinforced by flammenwerfers, took the wood; and made some progress towards Malancourt. On the 28th, after consolidating their position in the wood as well as they could under the harassing French fire, the Germans renewed their attack on Malancourt. General Pétain responded with a counter-attack at Avocourt Wood, driving back the Würtemburgers, who held it, from the edge of the wood and beyond the redoubt which they had constructed within its precincts. Malancourt was less essential as an advance work of Hill and than the Avocourt Wood, debouching from which the Germans would have had a comparatively narrow space to cross under concentrated fire; and it was relinquished, together with Haucourt, though not without a struggle. The lines were drawn thus more compactly about Hill 304 in preparation for the next attack on it.

Before this took place on 7th April the Germans made vigorous attempts to improve their position on the eastern side of the Meuse by outflanking, in the direction of Vaux, the Douaumont-Hardaumont positions. General von Mudra had by this time been substituted as commander of the German operations east of the Meuse. The hills, as they face eastwards, are curved like the sections of a tomato, and the ravines between the sections are clothed in trees.

often without success, and always with cost, a mile of French trenches was lost, and gave lost heavily,

The renewed attack of 7th and 8th April No fresh surprise could be sprung on the

but gradually boring their way to their object, the Germans a footing. On the other flank, On and April the last of a succession of these towards Cumières, a preliminary success was attacks got up the roadway between the followed by the loss, due to a French counter-Hardaumont and Caillette Woods, and attack, of the ground won. In the French captured most of the latter wood. A furious view, as expressed by General Pétain, this counter-attack ejected them, and both sides attack and its small results marked the end of the first phase of the battle of Verdun.



The German Attack on the French Positions west of the Meuro

The most northerly line, marked with XXX's, shows the French and Gerr To line intersecting this, marked with ODO's, shows the French position taken up under pressure of the German strate. on 16th March. This line was afterwards straightened to the per sion indicated by the addition of the third line in the map ranner from Avocourt to Most Homme, and remined thus to soth April.

along the northern slopes of Hill 304 to tered "by the French Second Army, Forges brook, south of Spur 265, behind

on Hill 304 was prefaced by a necessary defenders, and an Order of the Day by retirement of the French from Bethincourt, General Pétain emphasized the French view so that the new line ran from Avocourt Wood that the German attacks had been "shat-

This was, however, a view far from acthe crest of the Côte d'Oie to Cumières on ceptance by the German's Head-quarters the Meuse. The German attack (8th) em- Staff, which was aware that the British braced the whole of this line. In the Avg- armies were not yet ready for effective intercourt sector its complete repulse showed the vention, and which, having successfully value of Pétain's prior counter-attack on the taken the risk of standing on the defensive wood. A frontal attack on the Mort Homme, in 1915, while putting Russia out of action. from the Corbeaux Wood, was held off nearly was prepared to take the risk of expending all day, but towards the close a quarter of yet more men in the effort to immobilize The extraordinary reticence which the trenches on the river side were swept away. French preserved with regard to their losses, but the Germans could not hold the second and the occasional lapses from confidence line, and their supports were hurled back of their people-betrayed only by rare in the confused retreat from it. The attack Socialist interpellations in the French on the ravine was more successful, and the Chambers-may have led the Germans to wedge already made there was driven in exaggerate the losses and underrate the deeper and wider, so that the Mort Homme resiliency both of soldiers and civilians. was no longer the sole possession of the (Von Falkenhavn says the German object French. The Germans had a holding on was to force a decision before the British it. were ready.) At any rate, they proceeded, with preparations for attack on an undiminished scale, and with no palpable alterations of their tactics of laving the axe alterlines west of Verdun, now on the more constricted fortress area to the east of it. Their preparations continued during April, and were made irrespective of various sharp Homme.

(17th and 18th), and the attack spread from used more men and more ammunition. here eastwards till the whole front to the Between the Mort Homme and the river it assault was supported by a very heavy bar- on the 28th-29th, the Germans, bringing

the French before the British were ready. rage, under which the French first-line

While this prolonged attack was in proregardless of General Pétain's ratiocination, gress the French, under the direction of General Nivelle, a corps commander who had risen from command of a regiment since the beginning of the war, and who had nately on either side of the tree, now on the succeeded General Pétain as director of the Verdun defences, launched a surprise counter-attack on the eastern side of the river. The operation was entrusted to General Mangin and the 5th Division, and French attacks which had local successes took the form of a swift and sudden thrust north of Fort Vaux on the one side, and on at Douaumont Fort. The attack seized the the northern base of the Mort Homme on fort and the trenches to the west of it, but the other. The first German reaction made not those to the right, so that the northitself apparent on 4th May, when a heavy eastern corner was never mastered, and thus artillery preparation began, which lasted there never was much prospect that the gain three days before a renewed attempt to take could be held. It was held, however, until Hill 304 was made. A triple attack was the morning of the 24th, and is to be regarded directed against Hill 287-a spur of Hill as a tactical manœuvre, the principal purpose 304, against Avocourt Wood, and against of which was to disconcert the German plans. the ravine between Hill 304 and the Mort It was probably successful in its effort of exacting more men than it cost. It did not. Once again the Avocourt Wood attack however, interrupt the renewal of the attack failed; but progress was made in twelve on the Mort Homme line west of the Meuse. hours' concentrated fighting in the ravine, On 23rd May one of the major assaults of and the system of trenches in the northern the long siege laid to these defences began. slopes of Hill 304 had to be ceded. The It was pushed without cessation for six French fire, however, still dominated the days, in four or five parallel and alternating crest, and while Avocourt Wood was held attacks on the flanks and front of the Mort no farther progress could be made here by Homme and its sister buttress, Hill 204. the Germans. In order to support the The early history of it in respect of the two necessary flanking operations, two new main positions repeated that of previous attacks were made on the wood positions attacks, with the addition that both sides

river was under assault, the chief efforts was on the 24th more successful, for the being made at the ravine between Hill 304 French line was broken at Cumières, and and the Mort Homme. At the same time, the Germans pushed through as far as Chatan effort was made to cut in behind the Mort tancourt. They were fought back step by Homme on the river side. The double step by a French counter-attack, and finally,





ATTACKING THE VERDUN DEFENCES Brandenburgers attacking the Fort of Douaumont

French second lines near the river were held, and the Cumières territorial gains were small. The Mort Homme, further undermined by the widening of the wedge between it and Hill 304, could no longer be held as an outlier, its crest had to be abandoned, but the French established themselves on its western and southern slopes, and the crest remained a No Man's Land swept by the guns of either side.

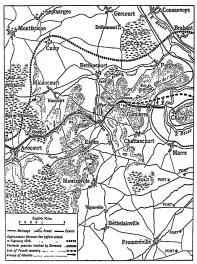
The relinquishment of the Mort Homme marked a stage in the success of the German policy of wearing down the French line octore it comes on analysis of a comment comment of the three characters. While the French were which were Forts Sorville and Tevannes. before it could be relieved by a counterthus pinned, they could only engineer such a counter-thrust by British help. Thus the problem became one of time-which side could endure losses longest? The Germans applied the same test locally. Having now pinned the French to 2 sleepless defence on the Côte d'Oie positions, they renewed their attempt to eat away the French purchase on the outer lines of the Verdun defences east was the funding piller behind the Donas- the last which premised as any moment to of the Meuse. Their first tactical step was directed to the capture of Fort Vaux, which began on 1st June, and spread from Haudestands Caillette Wood. Caillette Wood they seized again, and on and June used it as the starting-point for the climb across the nearest ravine to Fort Vaux.

At the same time, having seized the village of Damloup, they sent up an attack across the ravine on the other side of the fort. With very great skill, and very great courage, a remnant of the heavy storming parties got into the fort ditch to the north, and stayed here for four days. Their courage found many parallels among the French defenders, and especially among the tiny garrison of the fort under Major Raynal. Every device was tried to compel their surrender: and the German method of encircling the fort was one which tested the French soldiers' heroism to the utmost, for while the flank

up 5 fresh divisions, threw them into a utacks were continually fed with fresh inup 5 trem orthodological and a make were community rea with ten the list effort which embraced both the Mort family, a very heavy artillery barrage, on the uss coort suns canness ason use anne, savey acry armery carries, on the Homme and the Camiltee sector. The southern slopes leading to the fort, prevented any succour from reaching the fort and any possibility of retiring from it. The limit to human endurance was not reached till 6th May, when Major Raynal, and a handful of men, surrendered. The long resistance had enabled the French to withdraw their lines, and consolidate them in a new front drawn from the Froide-Terre Ridge, through the Thisumont Redoubt, Fleury, Fumin Wood, and Chapitre Wood. It then curved through Chenois Wood and La Laufee Wood, above Damloup. This line was good tactically, but it was not more than an average of 4 miles from the citadel, the last exterior bastions of

A preliminary feeler of the strength of this last line was made on 12th June, and as the result of it Thiaumont Redoubt was perceived to be the key of the position. A tentative attack on it on the 13th was followed on the 18th by the major assault, which was made with the prescribed three parallel thrusts (1) on Ridge 321, (2) on Thiaumont Redoubt, and (3) on Fleury village. This attack, with its developments, is extremely interesting, because it is to be regarded as The first attack win towards the desired goal of Verdun. It in breaking through seemed in sight; it none trees are the accumumant peacess to movement converge some region of the interment of the triple spars on which gained Thisumont, but did not gain Fleury. had to be told. The counter-attack, welltimed by the French tacticians, was always made at the time and place to rob the Germans, whose attacks were both persistent and determined, of the fruits of their energy and skill. It was a memorable duel, which ended with the French line bent behind both Fleury and Thiaumont, but still resilient. Before it ended General Nivelle had issued an Army Order asserting that this was the supreme German attack before the great counter-stroke against them matured. He referred, of course, to the operations on either side of the Somme and the Ancre, which were to be undertaken by the British army in conjunction with the French. But while the French, in spite of their pre-occupation with Verdun, were yet able 12th July, after the Somme battle had entered to send another army into action to co- on its second stage, they endeavoured to operate with Sir Douglas Haig, the Germans break out from Fleury along the road passing

asserted themselves capable of dealing with between the Thiaumont works and Fort



The Battles of Verdun, 1916: map—continued on the opposite page—showing approximately the limits of the German odvanos and the region recaptured by the French by the cad of the year

this effort while continuing their own at Souville. The attack was stopped, and by position for striking again; and on 11th and tion as the iron commander of an iron

Verdun. Moreover, though they had not the 15th the French were in a position to broken through the outer guard of Forts make a counter-attack. This was entrusted Souville and Tavannes, they had won a good to General Mangin, a general whose reputamany months of fighting. The French had, however, neither the men nor the inclination

division was enhanced at Verdun through Nivelle's prediction was sound: the character and purpose of the fighting before Verdun had changed, and was not again to relapse into an epoch-making struggle. For



depended on their skill and dash for such successes as they could win.

the Germans back by mass attacks, and two months from 18th August Verdun passed that the German bid for a decision in 1916 Fleury and the Thiaumont work changed failed, and failed before Verdun. The hands repeatedly in the following weeks, but failure extinguished the influence and posi-

this was given to the attack prepared under battalion. the supervision of General Mangin to retake On the right of Douaumont, Fort Vaux the strong points of the Douaumont and was thus left largely in the air. It was not, Vaux defences.

response from the German batteries,

tion of you Falkenhayn, who had conceived
The Germans had still 15 divisions in and matured the plan, and paved the way line between Avocourt Wood and Eix, for the ascendancy of Hindenburg and sufficient for defence, but some of them of Ludendorff in the counsels of the German inferior quality; the struggle on the Somme Great Head-quarters Staff. The trial to had drawn to that area more and more of their which the French had been subjected was best fighting material. Though they anticinevertheless a very high one; as high as the pated a French attack they were not aware enduring reputation which the French of the precise moment, and were in fact soldiers and their commanders won in its surprised in the fog of the morning of the defence: and though in many a field yet to 24th, when the three-pronged assault burst be fought the genius and indomitability of its way through the Thiaumont work on the the French military spirit were again to be left, the Caillette Wood in the centre, and exhibited, the wounds of Verdun went some the Damloup Redoubt on the right. The way to cripple the French resources. The assault had been so carefully rehearsed and German estimate, perhaps to be accepted with perfected in detail that the fog found it at reserve, is that, till 17th March, the French no disadvantage, while the speed at which had sent in 27 divisions: to 21st of April, 28: it was conducted discounted almost entirely to 8th of May, 51; and to middle of June, 70, the effect of the German barrage, which There was no sign of exhaustion in the answered the thunder of Nivelle's heavy and autumn operations there, where General light artillery. The keynote of success was Nivelle was permitted to work out a scheme struck by the rapidity with which Guyot de for the redemption of some of the strongholds Salins' division swept through the Thiauthat had been lost. The task was congenial to mont work after encircling it, and did not stop him and to his colleagues and subordinates; till it had reached the Haudremont quarries, and at Verdun schemes of attack were worked where the German defence of machine-gun out which were reflected in new tactics. posts arrested them. Passaga's division, One of such methods was the perfecting of in the centre, burst through Caillette Wood, the creeping barrage, by which the faultless- and then, according to the pre-arranged plan ness of the French artillery practice enabled which had ordered the assault to take place them to send a progressive curtain of shell- in two bounds, paused to reconstitute themfire in front of an attack; another was the sclves for the assault on Fort Douaumont. device, to which the conditions of assault at Passaga's troops were to close in on either Verdun lent themselves, of training the units side of it, in conjunction with the left wing of assaulting columns on ground which was of Guyot de Salins on their right. The modelled so as to reproduce the actual diffi- method succeeded; the actual honour of culties to be encountered. Training such as taking the stronghold fell to Major Nicolay's

however, to fall with such swiftness as its General Nivelle had been able by the more famous companion. The progress on third week in October to amass a consider- the right wing of the French attack had been able force of heavy artillery. It was to be slower, because the Germans, opining that the surprise of the attack which he had the French main attack was to be made here, designed, and which General Mangin was were better prepared to receive it. General to lead, with Generals Lardemelle (Vaux Lardemelles' division, which had taken Damsector), Passaga (Douaumont), and Guyot loup, was, however, in a strong position for de Salins (Thiaumont work). On 23rd Oc- further assault, and though for two days toher the striking force was deployed on a the Germans defended most courageously front of 5 miles, from the river to the Bois every machine-run position, crater, and Chenois, and a feint attack drew a heavy trench, they were at length encircled by the pushing up of fresh divisions (General



THE GERMAN DEFENCE SYSTEM OF 1917

British troops attacking one of the German concrete gun emplacements



Andlauer) through Fumin Wood, on the western side. On the morning of 2nd November the Germans blew up as much as they could of the fort and left it. Before that date they had fiercely, but unavailingly, counter-attacked at Douaumont, and by 4th November the whole of the Douaumont-Vaux-Damloup line had been recovered by the French. Seven German divisions had been dispossessed by 4 French divisions, perfectly led, and the victory carried with it 6000 German prisoners and a number of guns.

The Nivelle method, which had thus been so remarkably vindicated in this attack, was put into operation a month later in order to push the Germans back from the useful line they occupied and had strongly fortified, from Vacherauville, on the Meuse, over the Côte du Poivre, round the two woods at Haudremont and below the Douaumont Ridge to the outskirts of Vaux village. They held the line with 5 divisions, and were probably under the impression that the French would make no serious attack on them so late in the year. The German divisions were not good, and, as the general in command was subsequently removed, it is to be inferred that his ability was not first-class. For the attack on 14th December General Nivelle again put Mangin in command, giving him the 2 divisions of Generals Passaga and Guyot de Salins, with another veteran division under General du Plessis, and a young division under General Muteau. Muteau's division was entrusted with the simplest task of enveloping Vacherauville, ally without employment.)

on the Meuse (left); Guyot de Salins' was to advance towards the Côte du Poivre and Louvemont Ridge; De Passaga's and du Plessis' were sent towards Bezonvaux and the Caurières Wood.

The young, untried division did its work without a flaw; de Salins reached the Côte du Poivre in half an hour, and then made good his hold on the vital Louvemont Ridge by very hard fighting. The fighting was progressively harder towards the right wing, where the 2 divisions, though of such fine material, were held up by a salient wedged in their line at Chambrettes Farm, which they first took and then lost. It was not till the 16th that renewed attacks straightened out the line, and consolidated a new French position on the east side of the Meuse, as strong for tactical purposes as that from which they had been driven by the full weight of the German blow ten months before. The gains in this last triumphant vindication of French military ability comprised 11,400 prisoners and 115 guns. Four villages, five forts, many redoubts and trenches, were occupied, and the better part of 6 German divisions were broken up. The victory set the seal on Nivelle's reputation, and was one of the factors which placed him, on Joffre's recommendation, in chief command of the French armies in 1917. Other tasks were found for General Joffre, and General Foch's claims for the moment receded into the background, (Foch, in 1917, was sent to the eastern frontier, and for a time was actu-

PART II

The magnet of Verdun, though it attracted so great a share of the German resources, and kept them there for long after there was a prospect of a great return on the outlay, did not prevent the German Head-quarters Staff from disposing of very strong forces to resist the impact of the British armies on the Somme front; nor, on the other hand, did it distract General Joffre and the French Head-quarters Staff from maintaining two French armies—the Sixth and the Tenth—to second the British push when it was made. The first of these armies was under voil. VI.

General Fayolle, and drew from Verdun the famous Paris corps (20th) and 2 other corps, and was placed immediately south of Rawlinson's army. South of Fayolle was the French Tenth Army under General Micheler. Both armies were directed by General Foch. The German general in chief command of the forces opposed to the British was von Below, successor to von Bülow; opposite to Fayolle and Micheler was von Gallwitz (from Verdun). The Crown Prince of Bayaria was the nominal commander of the group. The French Sixth Army came into action on an

assault of the British on the Ancre-Somme easy range of the French 75's, compelled the defences on 1st July. Three corps partici- Germans to move back their railway compated in an assault on either side of the munications to Chaulnes. On oth July the Somme. The 20th Corps (General Bal- right wing of Favolle's army was within a fervier) took the section Maricourt to the mile of Péronne. North of the river the Somme; a Colonial corps (1st, General progress of the 20th Corps had been very Brandelat), and the 35th Corps (General much slower-evidence of the strong re-Allonier), faced the front from the Somme sistance offered by the Germans at this vital marshes, through Frise and Dompierre, to junction, where British and French were Fay. The attack was one of Foch's master- together aiming at securing the ridge posipieces, and, aided by the mistaken expecta- tions of the German second and third lines. tion of the Germans that no great effort But while von Gallwitz, who faced the French would be made here, it succeeded to perfec- here, maintained his position with difficulty, tion, and with far less loss than fell on the he was obliged to cede more and more British, especially at those defensive posi- ground to the 2 French corps attacking tions north of the Ancre, where the Germans south of the Somme. Their purpose was were only too well prepared for the British to advance so far as to bring a flanking attack.

To the Paris corps, which had a veteran reputation, fell the hardest fighting, and it had to pause outside the fortified villages of character of the ground through which it Curlu and Hardecourt. But south of the flowed, this threat could not become vitally river Brandelat's men walked through the dangerous for some time. The French were enemy before breakfast, capturing unpre- none the less reaping the reward of their pared German battalions and officers in their tactics by an increasing roll of prisoners, dug-outs. It was from this region that the the number of whom amounted to over larger number came of the 6000 prisoners 12,000 before the middle of July. taken by the French on 1st July; and the took them next day.

The menace of their advance to the neigh- avenue of approach by St. Pierre Vaast Wood

8-mile front, contemporaneously with the bourhood of Péronne, which was within artillery fire to bear on the German positions north of the Somme. But, owing alike to the configuration of the river and the marshy

Thenceforward, for some time, as the losses here were extremely light. By the Germans stiffened in their new positions afternoon the Colonial division had taken and got their excellent organization of three villages, Dompierre, Becquincourt, and supply, both of men and material, into Bussu; and Allonier's corps was in possession order, the advantages of surprise diminished, of Fay. The losses of the Paris corps had and south of the Somme, as north of it, been heavier, but it had inflicted a greater advances had to be purchased by hard one on its opponents, chiefly Bavarians, and, fighting. Yet by the middle of August the working its way round Curlu and Hardecourt, Paris corps of Fayolle's army had pushed far enough through the second German line From the disadvantages of this surprise to be able to attempt an assault on the third the Germans were slow to recover, and the line. On 12th August the Parisians ad-French were swift to exploit them. The vanced towards Maurepas, and beyond the Germans brought up reinforcements with southern road to Cléry, on a 4-mile front, great expedition, but their hands were full and on the 16th were beyond Maurepas on in the section where the British were en- both sides of it, and had straightened out deavouring to widen the breach at Mametz a salient so as to be in full alignment with and Montauban, and the German battalions, the British on their left. They took more hurried towards Fav and Dompierre, were than 1000 prisoners in these sections. fuel to the flame. The German second Thenceforward they joined hands with the positions were licked up by the Colonial British in isolating Combles, and, as already corps and Allonier's men on 2nd July, and recorded, forced their way steadily, though the latter had a hold on Estrées by 5th July. with increasing difficulty, past the narrow



The Allied Battle-deld on the Soutener map showing approximately by the shaded area the France-British gains from 1st July to 18th September, 1916

But, true to Foch's method (which, unfor- near the Somme, pushed them hard. On tunately for the duration of the war, did not 13th September the Sixth Army took have the opportunity for operations on the Bouchavesnes; progressing still farther grand scale till the summer of 1918), while towards Péronne on its northern side, on the Germans were engaged in parrying the 17th and 18th September the fortified advance of the British Fourth and French villages of Vermandovillers, Deniecourt, and Sixth Armies, a new area of combat was Berny, on the high ground above Barleux. opened by General Micheler's Tenth Army, were captured, and Barleux itself became farther south than Fayolle. On 5th Sep- marked for advance. Yet farther advance tember it attacked on a front of 12 miles on Barleux, south of the Somme, as on from Barleux to Chaulnes. It carried 3 Sailly-Saillisel, on the north, became tentamiles of German positions between Ver- tive as the weather worsened.

prisoners.

towards the heights of Sailly and Saillisel. held out. The French, however, especially

mandovillers and Chilly, and took 3000 If the Sailly-Saillisel positions could have been carried it would have been possible to While the Germans were pondering this work round the Péronne defences from the new threat to their railway communications north; and the same observation as to outat Chaulnes. Foch sent Favolle forward next flanking applies to Barleux, with respect to day on both sides of the Somme and captured positions south of Péronne. Finally, on the ridge which runs from Bouchavesnes 4th October and 8th October, the French to Clery on the Somme, as well as the village seized part of the road which runs through of Omiecourt.1 The threat to Péronne on Sailly to Péronne, and on the 16th took the both sides of the river was thus accentuated, village. Saillisel they did not reach, but As before, and as happened throughout the they maintained a position which prevented later stages of the Somme battle, the Ger- the Germans from debouching from St. mans had a tight enough grip on their Pierre Vaast Wood. This statement fairly organization to close it up against the new represents the profit and loss account of effort, and, though their counter-attacks from . the French share in the Somme battle at the 6th to 8th September against the whole ridges north of the river. On the river Allied line from Thiepval to Chilly won back itself Fayolle pushed forwards from Bouchano ground, it prevented any swift or decisive vesnes (15th) in conjunction with a movewidening of the breaches made. They could ment of Micheler, whose centre had gained not, however, prevent a continual crumbling, a hold on Ablaincourt (10th), and who now and it must always remain a possible surmise advanced north-east of it with a new gain that, had the weather lasted, and had 1916 of prisoners. The end of the autumn cambeen favoured with the September and paign of 1916 showed the French with a October summers of St. Martin and St. Luke, considerable gain of territory, with 70,000 the crumbling, accompanied as it was by prisoners-the larger number of them gained the decay of moral among German troops, in the hardly intermitted attacks south of who had been fighting hard without tangible the Somme-and threatening (with the results for six months, might have been British) the flank of the ridge north of the disastrous. The idea remains, however, a Somme, as well as Péronne south of it. They surmise, and it is certain that the Germans were approaching Mt. St. Quentin, which attained their maxim of Durchalten-and defends Péronne, from the north, and the Villers Carbonnel ridge, which protects it on the south.

¹ Not to be confused with Omicrourt, east of Chaulnes

CHAPTER XI

THE BRITISH CAMPAIGN IN THE WEST IN 1917

If the operations of the Allied armies in the west during 1916 are surveyed as a whole, they present the aspect of a force which is relatively quiescent on the larger part of the front for half the year, and during the second half of the year only undertakes offensive operations jointly over one eighth of the These joint operations involve 2 British armies and 2 French armies. If, again, these joint operations are more closely examined it will be seen that the actions of 2 British armies - Fifth and Fourth directed by Sir Douglas Haig, and the 2 French armies-Sixth and Tenth-directed by General Foch, are interdependent, rather than joint. Finally, it will be observed that in the autumn of 1916 Foch was moving his 2 armies in an anticipation of the manner in which he handled the whole of the combined forces in the autumn of 1918, when, after many struggles, a genuine sole command was in operation, and the Generalissimo could play with eight or ten armies as on the keys of a piano, striking with one or with two, when the others were temporarily quiescent-never keeping on one note too long, but never allowing the tune to cease.

This unity of command was never in operation till 1918, and it was perhaps not possible in 1916, for the reason that a condition of its existence was that all the armies under the control of the supreme commander should be ready to move at his word. The British armies were not ready, as Sir Douglas Haig makes clear, till July, 1916. They were then moved by an independent Commander-in-Chief, and though there was (as constantly asserted) complete accord between the British and French commands and constant collaboration, yet that was not the same thing as unity of command; and its effects were not the same. It is a reasonable assumption that if Foch, or some one else of Foch's ability, had been able to handle the 4 armies—British and French—which took part in the Battle of the Somme as

one instrument, then better results might have been obtained.

The point need not be laboured; but it is necessary to point out that, while there seemed to be in the autumn of 1916 some approach to this arrangement, it sank out of sight again in 1917, when, partly owing to political causes, and partly to that jealousy which is rarely absent in armies during long wars, a change was made in the French High Command, Joffre retiring, Foch being retired temporarily to the background, and General Nivelle, who as a corps commander had done so extraordinarily well at Verdun, being put over the heads both of Foch and Pétain. Nivelle was a fine soldier; his failure as Commander-in-Chief was that his ideas were in advance of his means. It need only be said here that he constructed an optimistic plan of campaign for the French armies in 1917, and that, before it broke down, the British Commander-in-Chief's dispositions were required in some respects to conform to it. Sir Douglas Haig, though he had his doubts about the soundness of Nivelle's plan, did conform to it. He had proposed to make his chief effort in the Ypres sector. In brief, the British strategy aimed at the freeing of the Channel ports, and the possibility thereafter of undertaking joint operations with the fleet which would place the whole weight of Great Britain on' the German flank in Belgium. This ideal differed entirely from the French strategic conception, which was always to strike at the German centre, and by dividing their western force into two halves, each fed by different railway supply systems, to open up an opportunity of dealing with the halves separately. The French plan won the support of the Allied Council. Sir Douglas Haig loyally did his share to make it a success. It was helped, or perhaps one should say that the British plan was frustrated, by two occurrences outside the western area of hostilities. The first was the Russian Revolution, which disposed of any prospect of Russian military aid-it had in effect dis- The first symptom of the general withappeared in 1016-and the second was the drawal was discovered on 14th March, when inability of the Italian armies to get ready in portions of St. Pierre Vaast Wood, which time to assail the Austro-Hungarian armies had held up the French attacks on the Saillyon the Isonzo. In a sentence, there was less Sallisel heights so effectually, were found unity of command among the Allies in 1917 untenanted. By 17th March the whole than at any time since Italy entered the war. British front from Rove to Arras was set in in 1915, though, owing to the German sub- motion, and the advance was made with

the Germans without a struggle was the first Ronssoy and Lempire (5th and 6th April), symptom that the resistance to the British While the British armies were pushing been in preparation all the winter.

marine campaign, there was more need for it, little resistance though Vaux Wood and The winter of 1016-17 was spent by the Achiet-le-Grand to Chaulnes and Bapaume, British forces aligned on either side of the while the French took Roye. The Ger-Ancre in improving the positions there, mans in their retreat ruined everything The last embers of the Battle of the Somme systematically, from fruit-trees and farmwere two attempts to seize the Butte de War- houses to the Hôtel de Ville at Péronne. On lencourt (5th November), which was part 21st-22nd March the British Fifth and of the larger endeavour to better the Allied Fourth Armies had pushed east of Péronne, position on the trunk roads leading to captured Roisel railway junction (24th Banaume. The attempt was gallant, but March), and Beaumetz-les-Cambrai, at which unsuccessful. No other operations except the Germans, however, made five counterthose of trench-raiding were imposed on the attacks, a sign that the advancing armies forces till January, when harder weather were approaching the German forward allowed the pressure to be made more con- position on the new line. By 2nd April tinuous, especially near Beaucourt and Beau- the Fifth Army was within 2 miles of St. mont-Hamel. On 3rd-4th and 6th Feb- Quentin, and the general line was firmly ruary the pressure became more effective, established through Selency, Epchy, Havthe counter-attacks less determined; and on rincourt Wood, Royalcourt, Doigny, Mer-7th February the cession of Grandecourt by catel, Beaurains; the Fourth Army took

on the Ancre was no longer to be maintained towards the Cambrai-St. Quentin line, the on the scale of 1016. It presently became French were moving on a 30-mile front from evident that not merely were the Germans the north of the Upper Somme to the south prepared to abandon the Ancre positions, of the Oise, towards the new German line but that they contemplated retirement on from St. Quentin behind Soissons, in front a larger scale. Miraumont, and Petit Mir- of the St. Gobain plateau. Ham was ocaumont were captured by the British after cupied by the French (19th March); Crouy a brief struggle (24th February); Serre was and Terenier, the crossings of the St. taken without a struggle at all (25th Feb- Crozat Canal (22nd), the Ailette river, and ruary); Le Bargue, Puisieux-defended only the lower part of the forest of Coucy. by stubborn machine-gun detachments pre- Towards the Chemin des Dames the French pared to sell their lives-and Gommecourt were able, as their guns came up, to drive (27th February), were all quickly captured. the Germans back on Vauxaillon and Laffaux By the end of February the Germans had (1st April), and on 3rd April were astride of fallen back to the positions of the Le-Trans- the Upper Somme, south-west of St. Quentin, loy-Loupart line, with the fortified Irles and in possession of Orvilliers and Moy. village forming a salient in it. Irles fell to Bohind this line, as it extended to Rheims, a well-planned assault on 10th March, and General Nivelle matured, as well as he could with it went the practicability of the Ger- under the changed conditions, his preparamans holding any longer this forward line, tions for the great French attack towards Its fall was the prelude to the larger with- Laon. How gravely his plans were predrawal to that Hindenburg line which had judiced by the retreat only appeared subsequently.

Hindenburg defences to which the Germans to all intents and purposes that of storming had been withdrawn, was a well-known fortress fronts, and which must be borne in strategic position; its novelty consisted only mind in considering the length of time that in the elaboration of fortification which the was occupied by an army, or an operation, Germans had conferred upon it, though in getting under way. The experience of another nevelty was imported by the syste- 1017, as of previous years, showed that matic dependation of country by which they attacks conducted in a hurry usually ended had made approach to it more arduous. The in quick disaster. For the Arras operations line, geographically, extended from the west railways and roads, buts and water-supply, of Dougi and Cambrai to St. Quentin, and mining and tunnelling, were a preliminary thence to the Laon-La Fère position. The necessity, and all had to be constructed with Laon-La Fère position was the southern the same labour as before the Battle of the bastion of the line; the Vimy Ridge, north- Somme. east of Arras, the northern dominating Before the German fortress front of 15

stance which was necessitated by the and in the number of its devices; the period

The Siecfried line, a part of the so-called exiguous demands of fighting which was

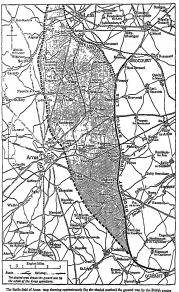
height. There are three historical military miles from Croissilles to Givenely, a counterrouter by which an army marches through fortress front had to be constructed before the northern defences of France. The the attack was joined. These IT miles inwesternmost is along the valley of the Scarpe, cluded 4 or 5 miles of the northern end of which Dousi blocks; the second is along the the Siegfried (or Hindenburg) line, which valley of the Scheldt, on which stands the Germans had constructed as a counter-Combrai, the hub of roads and railways: the defence to the new style of siere-operations third is the valley of the Sambre, where St. to which they had been subjected in 1916. Quentin and La Fère act as guardians. The Farther north, the original German defences La Fère-Laon position was to prove im- were much the same as those captured with prognable to General Nivelle. It was the such toil in the Somme battle, and comsouthern bastion of the fortress line which prised three trench systems which were the Germans drew from Drocourt to Queant, joined up so as to make a defensive helt of ther.ce to St. Quentin, and beyond it east- country 2 to 5 miles in depth. Behind them wards. The Vimy Ridge was the north- by 3 to 6 miles a new line of resistance, from western pillar. Sir Douglas Haig in attack- Drocourt to Quéant, joined the Hindenburg ing this, was not, bowever, considering the line at the latter place. There was but one possibility that the British, at that time, were way of reducing these defences by preliminary concerned in breaking the Hindenburg line. bombardment, and that was by co-operation In Sir Douglas Haig's original plan of with aeroplane observation. Although no campaign for 1917 be had intended to make such thing as absolute supremacy in the air the attack on the Arras front the preliminary was attained by either side during the war. to the main operations farther north. This the British aeroplanes were at this time in a attack might, had the Germans not decided high state of efficiency, and after a period of to evacuate their undermined positions on heavy fighting succeeded in establishing a the Anere, have captured, by outflanking, local superiority which gave the British artilany of their forces which beld on too long; lery comparative immunity, and enabled it but the reasons for its prosecution remained to proceed more effectively with its work unchanged, and the plans which Sir Douglas of destroying the German defences. The Haig had made for it fitted in very well with methodical bombardment for this purpose the French requirements that the British extended for three weeks before the date of should engage the German attention while the attack (oth April), and was accompanied General Nivelle developed his great attack by gas-attacks, night-raiding, and wirefrom Soissons to Rheims. The preparations cutting expeditions. It might in general be for the Arras attack had been extremely said that the mechanical side of the attack minute and had lasted months, a circum- had greatly increased in ingenuity, intensity, of preparation was longer; the bombardment court. They had paid a high price in doing ciency, were used in the actual attack.

Horne) and Third (General E. H. Allenby) Neuville Vitasse in the south (with the sole -unused in the main operation of 1916, exception of the Railway Triangle), and the were prepared for this action. Allenby had artillery was moving up behind the attack 4 army corps, with a fifth in reserve. The to new positions. This pre-arranged moveaction of the First Army on 9th April was ment had been disconcerted by the lengthlimited to the attack on the Vimy Ridge, to ened resistance of Observation Ridge. The be entrusted to the Canadian Corps; but little grit which gets into the best of plans other troops were to extend the attack of this began thenceforth to take effect. The artilcorps northwards, and General Horne had lery-fire on the German third positions was also a corps in reserve. It was planned, no longer dominating; it even left swathes according to the new French method in- of wire uncut, and it was not prohibitive of culcated by Nivelle, to make shock advances German counter-attacks. Nevertheless, the in successive stages, so as to consolidate the infantry, persuaded of victory, and flinchassault before succeeding obstacles. The ing hardly at all from losses, accomplished first stage of the advance, made after a most a great deal in spite of their handicap. effective bombardment, and on the heels Scottish troops bore down the resistance of of a perfectly-timed creeping barrage, flowed Railway Triangle, and with this obstacle over the German first-line defences in threequarters of an hour. Only at one point, and part got through Feuchy, repulsing a counterthat an important one on the extreme left, attack, and piercing along a short section to where the Canadian Corps had been sent to the German third line. They could not, take Vimy Ridge, was there effective opposi- however, widen the breach and get in to tion. Here the Canadian division, with an Monchy-le-Preux. North of the Scarpe, English brigade at its centre, overran the although Hill 145, at the extreme left of the German positions like the rest, including La attack, was not completely subdued, the Folie Farm, and eventually took the whole success was elsewhere very gratifying. The ridge, after hard fighting, from Comman- Canadians and their supports had dug themdant's House to Hill 145. But at Hill 145 the selves in on the eastern slopes of Vimy Ridge. most northerly Canadian division had a very Farther south, St. Laurent Blangy and severe task, and could not force the enemy Athies village were captured, and then an out. They lost heavily and had to postpone English division, taking up the task which their attack on the crest till the following Scottish troops had begun, captured Famday, though the result of that attack was hardly in doubt.

From Vimy Ridge to the Scarpe the German resistance was more determined than to the north of it. As a whole, however, the German first line was captured in an hour. The predetermined pause for aligning the

heavier. Tanks, slowly increasing in effi- so. But by noon, six and a half hours of fighting had yielded the German second Two armies-the First (General Sir H. S. lines from La Folie Farm in the north to removed, the division of which they were a poux village and the neighbouring redoubt, thus making another breach in the German third line.

The attack had been made on a showery day. The weather broke into squalls of heavy wind, snow, and rain next day, and hampered the bringing up of the guns with second stage of the attack followed an hour which to hammer home the first blow. Thus, later. The resistance was now less disor- though the uncaptured position of Hill 145 ganized, and the first hitch in the time-table was made good by the Canadians in the was occasioned by the fierce resistance north north, and the gap at Feuchy was widened of Tilloy, at Observation Ridge, and in the in the south, the German defensive organiplexus of defences at Railway Triangle. The zation snatched an opportunity to recover, Scottish and North Country troops north of and, in the Monchy-le-Preux directions the the Scarpe had had to break down a stinging expected advantages were not fully reaped. opposition of machine-gun fire at Roclin- The outskirts of that village were reached,



in Drocourt and Queent, in the Battle of Arras

but the German machine-gun fire from the fortified villages of Heninel, Wancourt, and Guémappe exacted a heavy toll of the advance. The English and Scottish divisions struggled hard against the severe handicap of an artillery support impotent to subdue the machine-gun. The 11th of April witnessed a repetition of this hard and costly battering of a protected stronghold. Monchyle-Preux was, indeed, taken by two infantry brigades which were led into the village by Tanks, but everywhere else the British rifle, insufficiently aided by artillery, was unable to mount and hold forward slopes crisscrossed by machine-gun fire. An attempt was made to divert the attention of the Germans by an attack on their front farther south. Australians and West Riding battalions were sent forward at dawn in the neighbourhood of Bullecourt. The enterprise was not a fortunate one. The Tanks which preceded the Australians began well, and aided by them the infantry most skilfully and courageously burst their way as far as Riencourt, but several of the new experimental weapons were shot to pieces or foundered, and the Australians extricated themselves from an untenable position with severe losses and a long-lasting distrust of Tanks.

It had been hoped that by this attack the possibility of enabling the Third and Fifth Armies to join hands beyond the German third line would be achieved; but the undiminished resistance at Heninel and Wancourt prevented the consummation of this hope. It was not till the 12th, when several batteries of heavy guns and howitzers could be got up to bear on these village strongholds, that with their aid the infantry were able to take them. Their capture, together side of the Souchez River. The importance the German losses, in endeavouring to close

of this capture by 12th April was far-reaching. It put an end to the German prospects of a remunerative counter-attack, and decided their General Staff on withdrawal from an area where, while the British held the Vimv Ridge, their defence would be conducted at a disadvantage. The possession of the Vimy Ridge, which was never abandoned, was one of the most important factors in stemming the German onslaught in 1918, when the Third Army, entrenched in the Vimy-Arras positions, obliterated the German attack which was to widen the breach made between St. Quentin and Cambrai by the defeat of General Gough's Fifth Army, Ludendorff in his Memoirs admits that he had not the wherewithal to take Virny Ridge and attack Gough at the same time.

The immediate advantages of the victory of oth-12th April were perceived in the withdrawal of the Germans on the 13th and 14th from Givenchy-en-Gohelle, Angres, Vimv and Petit Vimv. Willerval, and Liévin. The German retreat was hurried, and left much material behind it. But in the southern sectors of the British attack there was no such exploitation of the Third Army's gains. The troops had fought their way fanwise through the breach they had made till they reached Fontaine-les-Croisilles: the positions at Heninel and Wancourt were improved; but at Monchy-le-Preux, which, after a long and bitter struggle, was left in British hands, the vehemence of the German counter-attacks was evidence that no further advance was to be expected in that direction, The operation as a whole had reached the peak of maximum productiveness for expenditure, and the advantages to be derived from its further prosecution would diminish with a mile and a half of the Hindenburg with the increasing vigour of German reline south of the Cojuel River, represented sistance. It had, however, yielded a good the sum of the position won south of the profit on its original outlay of lives, muni-Scarpe by the Arras attack. Immediately tions and energy. In six days' fighting the north of the Scarpe a long-contested duel British front had rolled 4 miles farther about Roeux began, but on the outside left east, securing a number of valuable positions. the completion of the capture of the valuable and capturing some 13,000 prisoners and 200 Vimy Ridge was accomplished by the cap- guns-the most considerable success as the ture of the subsidiary hill positions, the result of one action that British troops had "Pimple" and the Bois-en-Hache, on either yet secured against the enemy. Moreover,

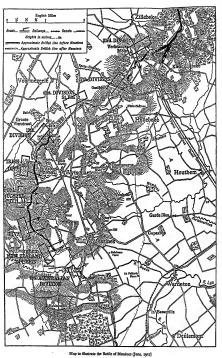
far 25 Sir Douglas Haig's plans were con- it had been hoped that it would be but the cerned, it would have suited him best to first step towards Laon and the great lateral break off the action altogether at this point, railway running through that centre. Conand transfer the bulk of his striking forces to sequently, two more attacks on a considerable Flanders at once in order to put the favoured if not on the greatest scale were delivered British plan into action.

erest attack was launched in Champagne, and The first of these attacks was delivered on in order to give to it the best possible oppor- an 8-miles front north of Monchy-le-Preux. carry on at Arras with the object of diverting a deceptive width was given to the attack by German reserves. The attack was therefore subsidiary thrusts both north and south of resumed (23rd April) on a 9-mile front, from it. In spite of the intention to limit the Gavrelle to Croisilles, and was an expensive scope of the assault, the fighting went on for business. Good progress was made at first. two days. The Canadians took Arleux-en-Cherisy was captured; Scottish troops pushed Gohelle, English troops pushed forward near took Infantry Hill (well named) beyond Scarpe, but the fighting was hand-to-hand-Monchy-le-Preux. Rocux station and wood one should perhaps say bomb-to-bomb-and violed ground to hard fighters; a British the most satisfactory feature of the engagealtered tactical situation became at once intention was the volume of the counterby them, and very fierce fighting throughout 1000 prisoners. the 23rd and 24th at Rocux, Gayrelle, and The second attack on 5th May, which was been, unwilling to pay.

the Feuchy gap, had been heavy, and so the principal object of their attack, though by the Third Army (28th April), and by the But on the 16th of April General Nivelle's First, Third, and Fifth Armies (3rd May). tunity, the British commander was asked to No advance in depth was projected, though through Guemappe; other British troops Oppy and between Monchy-le-Preux and the Naval Division captured Gavrelle. But the ment from the point of view of its tactical visible in the immediate German reaction, attacks which it elicited from the Germans. which was pushed with the utmost deter- Sir Douglas Haig's dispatch allows it to be mination by the enemy. The Germans lost inferred that the Germans lost heavily in heavily, it is true, but Guemappe was taken these counter-attacks. They certainly lost

Guemanne ensued before the British could twice the width, but which also had no lay claim to these places. The operations distinct objective before it, embraced Fresnoy may be said to have been a British victory; (First Army), Fontaine-les-Croisilles (Third) points were won and 3000 prisoners taken; Army), and a stretch of the Hindenburg line Sir Douglas Haig remarks in his dispatch near Bullecourt (Fifth Army). The energy on the testimony to the losses suffered by of the assault was sufficient to carry Canathe Germans in their obstinate resistance. dians, English, Scottish, and Australians But our own losses were also high, and the into the enemy's first positions over a length character of the German counter-attacks gave of 16 miles. The most striking incidents of clear warning that further pressure could only it were the Canadian exploit at Fresnov, be exerted here at a cost which the British where Germans were found massed for an Commander-in-Chief was, and should have attack which was thus broken up before it was delivered; and the Australian revenge at It was certain by this time that whatever Bullecourt for the disastrous advance of 11th the Erstish did here would not contribute to April. The Australians worked their way the success of the French movement in forward very cleverly east of Bullecourt, and, Champagne. Nevertheless, in order to help outflanking a forward Prussian battalion, Nivelle to convert what had been an ex- forced it back on its own depths of wire, tremely costly offensive into a capital gain, where it could neither retreat nor advance, the British Commander-in-Chief agreed to and was shot to pieces. Elsewhere East the continuance of his movements at Arras till Anglian troops took Cherisy and other the French had at any rate made good their English troops entered Roeux; but neitherfooting on the Chemin-des-Dames, which was of these could be held against the persistent





counter-attacks and the heavy gun bombardment with which the Third Army's battalions were assailed.

Again the sacrificial attack of the British forces gained some ground and about 1000 prisoners, but it had cost a good deal in men. It had also cost time, and this proved, before the end of 1917, a matter of even greater importance. Probably, however, by drawing into its scope a number of German reserve divisions, it did aid the French in their attempt on the 5th of May to obtain command of the eastern portion of the Chemin-des-Dames Ridge. Whether the expenditure both of British and of French resources on this object were justified is a matter of controversy. The French Government's opinion may be gauged from the fact that General Nivelle was shortly afterwards superseded, and M. Painlevé, the French Premier of the day, has since allowed it to be understood that the Soissons-Rheims attack was condemned by Generals Mangin and Micheler from the outset, and was never within measurable distance of success. Foch and Pétain conducted the operations at the Chemin-des-Dames and elsewhere on a more modest scale throughout the year. With the conclusion of the last great-scale attack which the French were to deliver for fourteen months, Sir Douglas Haig was left free to pursue his own Channel Ports strategy. The efforts of the spring campaign had conquered 60 square miles of territory and the invaluable Vimy Ridge buttress, and had taken nearly 20,000 prisoners and 250

All this time the preliminary steps for the Ypres salient advance had been in preparation; though until the Arras experiment was at an end it was not possible to divert the whole amount of labour and material necessary to give to the northern movement a chance of a success. Nor was it possible to divert divisions by breaking off the southern action abruptly. An appearance of activity had to be kept up during May, and certain commitments had to be redeemed by positive action, as at Bullecourt, where the positions gained by the Australians must be consolidated or abandoned. Fighting for Bullecourt went on for a fortnight; it was at

last secured by London and West Riding Territorials (17th May). Fresnoy was lost; Roeux regained (14th May); a line established between Bullecourt and west of Fontaineles-Croisilles (16th June). Before that date the Messines attack by the British Second Army (Sir H. Plumer) had been launched.

More than any other does the Messines Battle assume the character of a siege operation. It was the more difficult to conduct because the area was under direct observation by the enemy, and consequently a great part of the preparations were made underground. The natural positions of the Messines Ridge selected for assault were, in fact, mined. Mining had been projected for a year; intensive mining, largely plotted by an Australian geologist (Professor David), had been in progress six months. In all, twenty-four mines were constructed, involving more than 5 miles of gallery. The enemy were not idle in counter-mining, and an incessant underground warfare was carried on. It is not too much to say that the British out-mined the Germans, and when, on the day appointed, a million pounds of explosives wrecked the German positions, the eruption and its effects were exactly what the British experts had fore-

The Messines-Wytschaete Ridge, at which these operations, and the subsequent assault of Plumer's army, were directed, lies about midway between Armentières and Ypres. It is at the eastern end of the isolated hills which separate the Lys and the Yser; it links them with the rising ground going north across the Ypres-Menin road and on to Passchendaele. Messines village, on the southern spur, looks over the Lys, and what were then the British lines in the salient. North-west of it is the village of Wytschaete, from which, even more commandingly, could be seen Ypres' ruins and the old British positions. The German lines skirted the western advance foot of the ridge. Their second system formed an inner curve on the ridge, and these defences were strengthened by two chord positions stretching across the arc of the salient, the first through Oosttaverne, the second, behind it, through Warneton. It need hardly be said that the Germans, conscious of the advantages which tured whole here, bore witness to the wholethe ridge conferred, had spared no pains or sale character of the German collapse; the ingenuity to fortify it. The front selected defenders surrendered without putting up for the British attack extended in a curve a fight; and by evening the Oosttaverne line following that of the salient: first St. Yves had, by its capture, rounded off as complete to Mount Sorrel; the final objective was the an engagement "according to plan" as any Oosttoverne line.

Nincteen mines, the largest of which made 7200 prisoners and 67 guns were captured, a crater 140 yards across, were exploded The consolidation of the captured positions punctually at 2.10 a.m. on 7th June, and was effected during the night, and a very gave the signal alike for the guns and the ineffective counter-attack up the Warnebeke infantry. So well was every factor timed stream was easily broken up next morning. that English, Irish, Australian, and New A better organized counter-attack in the Zealand troops almost walked through the evening of 8th June was beaten off along the remains of the first line of trenches and began whole front of the Oosttaverne line-a to climb up to attack the second line on the testimony to the energy of the engineering erest. In two and a half hours Irish regi- parties which had helped to build up the ments had reached L'Enfer Hill, the out- British temporary defences. Subsequent skirts of Wytschaete and Wytschaete Wood consolidation occupied four days, with a (through which a South of Ireland division constant activity in front of the new line, fought its way). Wessex men eleared the and endeavours to extend it laterally at both Grand Bois: other English county regiments ends. By the 14th of June the whole of reached the Damstrasse. The advance was the old German front and support lines so swift as to outpace the Tanks; but one of north of the Lys had been captured; and these arrived in time to help the infantry to a British attack on that evening, south and break down the resistance of a machine-gun east of Messines, and along both banks of position north-east of Messines. There was the Ypres-Comines Canal, enabled the the usual heavy fighting at one or two un- front of the Second Army to be pushed subdued fortress positions, in which the forward along a secure line from the River German machine-gunners sustained their Warnave to Klein Zillebeke. high reputation for this form of defence: The southern buttress, or pivot, for the about a quarter to half a mile short of it.

that the campaign had witnessed. In all

and Wytschacte was a focus of determined operations which were designed to secure resistance. It was taken by 2 Irish divi- the Ypres salient by the capture of the sions, who blasted their way through it northern ridge to where it infringed on shoulder to shoulder. Before midday the Houthulst Forest, was thus secured. The second-line positions on the crest had been ultimate object - not attained - of these taken; the guns were moving up, and the operations was to turn the German flank divisions were aligning to press down the towards the Belgian coast. The steps by eastern slopes of the ridge towards the which this was to be attained are perceptible. Oosttaverne line. Before it could be reached The British Fifth Army, which was to be Ravine Wood had to be cleared, and isolated the striking force, took over the front from companies of Germans to be cleared out of Observatory Ridge to Boesinghe; and the farmhouses, woods, and coppices and strong heterogeneous dispersion of French, British, points in the fortified banks of the Ypres- and Belgian troops nearer the coast was re-Comines Canal; but early in the afternoon arranged. The section nearest the sea had guns and men were in position for the final been occupied by French detachments, and assault on the Oosttaverne chord line, and the Belgians sandwiched between them and the British. British troops replaced the The last burst forward began at 3 o'clock, French coastal forces; and in the first week and before 4 o'clock Oosttaverne village had of July the Belgian division from Boesinghe been captured, and the chord line east of it to Noordschoote was relieved by the French pierced. Two batteries of artillery, cap- First Army (General Anthoine). At this

moment, however, the German High Command intervened with a counter-stroke which, though made only on a small front, was sufficient to upset any contemplated pressure brought by the Allies in the coastal

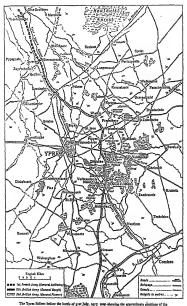
The strip taken over by British troops from the French was 2 miles in width, lying north of the Yser between the Passehendaele Canal, south of Lombartzyde, and the coast. Between this canal and the coast the Geleide Creek divided the position into two parts. Early on 10th July the German guns, including some specially brought up, opened on this position, breaking up the bridges on the Yser and over the creek, and levelling the defences. A strong infantry attack followed. and the net result was that the British tenure north of the Yser bank was destroyed, a number of the Northamptons and Rifles were overwhelmed, and others had to save of his opponent's plans.

gas, smoke, and thermit along the 12-miles held. front; while sharp thrusts were made else- Under the effects of our bombardment and

dian and English troops took 300 prisoners. These minor actions were, as will be perceived, antecedent to the Lombartzyde setback, but were, like it, contemporaneous with the most industrious and energetic preliminaries in the Ypres salient, where, as at Messines, tunnelling and mining were a species of warfare in themselves. The aerial preparations were not less vigorous or determined, and approached a climax towards the 31st of July, the date to which the opening of the attack had been postponed.

The original date had been the 25th, and two days later than that it was found that the Germans were adopting the expedient of attempting to disarrange our scheme of assault by withdrawing a part of their front line to second lines. The British counter to this manœuvre was to cross the Yser Canal and to seize, with the aid of the Guards and themselves by swimming the Yser. No troops from General Anthoine's army, the German penetration followed because the German first-line and support trenches on line was mended again in the southern section a 2-mile front east and north of Boesinghe. nearest Lombartzyde. In chronicling this They held on to this gain in spite of all minor disaster, Sir Douglas Haig remarks attempts to eject them, and thus secured a that it made the sector easier for the Germans valuable jumping-off place for the attack. to defend, which is quite true. It also made The reasons for this tactical blunder on the it extremely difficult, to the point of being part of the Germans are uncertain; it may impracticable, for us to exert dangerous be that they withdrew prematurely owing to pressure here without signalling the fact that mistaken information as to the date of the a major operation was in progress; and the attack. The value of the forward position action was, in short, one of those small, but was that it was situated at one extremity of far from insignificant, spokes which the in- the projected attack, which, in its main telligent German so often put into the wheels effort, was to open up on a 76-mile front from Boesinghe to the Zillebeke-Zandvoorde Meanwhile these plans went on in the road. General Gough (Fifth Army) was salient and elsewhere with a steady pro- given 4 army corps for this assault, which gressiveness which ignored difficulties and was designed to move forward in a series of presented a bearing of unalterable confidence. bounds, keeping step with the advance of Minor attacks continued in the Arras sector the First French Army on its left. On the (Third Army: Monchy-le-Preux, 14th June), right the Second British Army was to advance at Lens, and the Souchez River during the only a short distance, its aim being merely whole of June; and on the last days of June to attract and disperse part of the German a deliberate attempt was made to lead the defensive effort. The object of the attack Germans to believe that an attack was being may be stated as that of securing the crest projected from Gavrelle to Hulluch, the of the high ground east of Ypres. The deception being buttressed by discharges of crossings of the Steenbeek should also be

where, of which the most important was on the employment of our new weapon-a the Souchez River (28th June), where Cana- combination of oil and thermit which was a



approximate positions of the

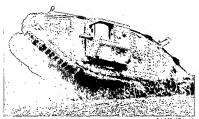
throwers of the Germans-the German first north, where the French co-operation had lines were all but emptied of their defenders, been perfect, secured the enemy's second and French, English, Scottish, Irish, and line as far as St. Julien (and beyond it at Welsh troops entered them all the way from Bixschoote) as well as the Steenbeck crossthe Tansbeek floods to the Zillebeke-Zand- ings; and in the south had a hold on the voorde road. On the left, the French and ridge crest, except at Westhock. The British troops carried the whole first-line Second Army, to which a subsidiary part only system with scarcely a check, and proceeded had been allotted, had advanced some little according to time-table to assault the second distance with small losses and great success, lines. By nine in the morning, five hours capturing La Basse Ville and Hollebeke. after starting, Verlorenhoek, Pilkern, and Between them the Allies had taken some Frezenberg had been stormed, and all the 8000 prisoners and 40 guns. second line north of the Ypres-Roulers In Sir Douglas Haig's dispatch relating railway had been seized. The French had to these operations mention is made at this made good their advance with equal decision point of the deplorable weather, the effects and with small loss. The field artillery of which, in a country where the sinking of moved up behind and broke down the rem- any trench found water, were disastrous to nants of opposition at a strong point-the any commander who wished to move quickly. Pommern Redoubt-so that the third bound From this time onwards the hopes of many on this portion of the front could be resumed promising movements were drowned in the at the hour assigned. St. Julien was cap- mud of the salient, and the handicap of the tured; Highland, Welsh, and Guards bat- conditions was so obvious that it is imtalions secured the crossings of the Steen- possible for any critic to say that military beek, and the French battalions, having also genius might have riscn superior to them. secured their final objectives, advanced But this much may be observed, that if, in beyond them and seized Bixschoote. A the first place, the British plan had been put counter-attack at the Franco-British junction into action earlier in the year, the delays might was beaten off.

subdued defences. As the result of the Ypres-Menin road, and near St. Julien.

yast improvement on the crude flame- day's work, therefore, the Allies had in the

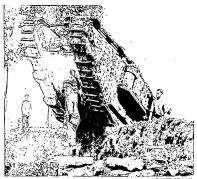
have been less crucial, and the final quench-In the southern portion of the attack the ing in October need not have occurred: and. advance had gone less smoothly and swiftly. in the second place, had there been complete The German resistance in the difficult Franco-British unity of effort, the blows at country east of Ypres, where the Ypres- the Germans would not have been confined Menin road crosses the crest of the ridge to one section of country, and that the one that goes from Wytschaete to Passchendaele, in which these conditions were most operaand where lay the key of the position, was tive. It is none the less indisputable that obstinate and protracted. Sanctuary Wood, the weather which dogged Sir Douglas the Bellewaarde Ridge, Hooge, and Shrews- Haig's offensives in August and later was bury Forest were all regions which had to be abnormal; and that with ground which, fought through, or fought for, and on either after four days incessant rain, "was transside of the notorious road a determined formed into long stretches of bog impassable resistance disputed the advance over every except by a few well-defined tracks, which yard. Two small woods, and a redoubt in became marks for the enemy's artillery", a larger one, held out, and held up the attack it was impracticable to push on the first till next day, and the limits of success were August offensive to the limits of its promise, set by the outskirts of the village of West- The delay naturally afforded the Germans hoek. At the two small woods Tanks came time to recover from the disorganization into action late in the day, in time to help into which the first attack had brought them. the hard-tried infantry in repelling the It also gave confidence to their countercounter-attacks which the Germans were attacks, which were begun with promptitude, able to set in motion from behind their un- especially on the high ground abutting on





A BRITISH TANK GOING INTO ACTION

Advancing to the successful attack on the Hindenburg Line



A BRITISH TANK AWAITING THE ORDER TO ADVANCE

Some of the crew outside for a breath of air

Their artillery soon found volume and direction, and St. Julien was lost before being retaken on 3rd August; but the date itself indicates what was actually happening in the days following the big attack, and it was that after it the Allies were engaged, not in pushing on, but in clearing up. It was not, in fact, till 16th August that the second bound forward could be attempted.

On the day before it was set in motion a highly-successful minor operation at Lens by the Canadian Corps not only greatly improved the situation of the British forces in that neighbourhood, but by threatening the town more immediately drew German reserves to it, thereby lessening the number that could be diverted to oppose the main offensive. The front attacked was some two and a half miles in width; the results achieved included the capture of that Hill 70 on which so many hopes had perished, so many lives been lost, in the Battle of Loos two years before, as well as a number of the mining suburbs; and 1100 prisoners from 3 German divisions holding the defences.

While the Germans were digesting the import of this surprise, the main salient attack was renewed (16th August) north and east of Ypres by the Fifth British and First French Armies. The French were given the task of clearing the Bixschoote peninsula, which they did with great speed and at a relatively light cost, their casualties occurring chiefly at the remaining fortified farms abutting on the Steenbeek stream. The British brigades joining the French also did their work with speed and quick success, clearing up a hamlet between their front and Langemarck, and taking the section of the Langemarck-Gheluvelt defensive line three hours after starting. These gains were kept, and were supported by the determination of other brigades on their right, which in spite of counter-attacks established themselves on a line running north from St. Julien to the old German third line east of Langemarck. But while thus, on the left of the attack, gains were made with ease, or by hard fighting, the conditions became reversed on the attack extended towards Inverness Copse on its

A new form of position-defences had been

devised by the Germans in the absence of the ability to construct dug-outs in soil where the water always lay a few feet below the surface. These were the "pill-boxes" -reinforced concrete structures, often a number of feet thick, and resistant even to direct shell-bursts. Heavily armed with machine-guns, and by machine-gun companies who were at their best in such surroundings, these field fortresses were the most dangerous obstacles to an advance, because, while some were quickly reduced -generally by bombing-others held out long after the assaulting troops had passed them, becoming a deadly menace to supports, and a focus for the encouragement of counter-attacks. They partially ruined the successful advance of the British centre, which, after reaching the points assigned to it, was, in the absence of adequate artillery support, unable to hold up against a heavy counter-attack in the neighbourhood of the Wieltje-Passchendaele road. While the pillboxes and our own inadequate artillery support—the blame for which Sir Douglas Haig imputes to the weather, because it made aeroplane observation impossible—threw the British centre back, the very capable German resistance on the British right (south) prevented any but slight gains being made south of St. Julien. The northern sectors (mainly) had taken 2000 prisoners and made a gap in the German defences; but it is difficult to describe the attack of 16th August as anything but a check.

By this time, however, the Head-quarters Staff had perceived that part of the British failure to advance through the mud was attributable to the adaptation of the German tactics to the conditions, and to the adoption of a system of defence in which the Germans emptied their front trenches and poured a waiting counter-attack on the enemy occupiers of them before the newly-taken positions could be consolidated. It was time to devise new methods of attack: and another pause supervened before these could be put into operation.

In the interval a number of operations which, in spite of their restricted aim, provoked hard fighting, and demanded a high degree of skill in order to obtain results

(22nd to 28th August), where a footing was at all points to its destination. established on the western edge of Inverness Copse, and near St. Julien, where, between 19th and 27th August, a half-mile advance was made over a front of 2 miles. There was other fighting at Lens (21st August) and at Hargicourt1 (26th August), with local gains and captures.]

The spade work at St. Julien and the Menin road paved the way for the larger attack, in which the Second Army and the Fifth Army were to co-operate, the Second Army attacking the high ground about the Ypres-Menin road, and the Fifth Army extending the attack northwards on the line of the Ypres-Roulers railway. The front of attack extended a distance of 8 miles from Langemarck, north of the railway, to the Ypres-Comines Canal, north of Hollebeke. The advance was a tribute to the preparatory care with which it had been organized, and it surmounted the handicap of rain and mist which ushered it in on the morning of 24th September. Welsh and West Country troops farthest south eleared the small woods in front of them north of the canal: English regiments made their way along and across the valley of the Bassevillebeek, and up the slopes of the Tower Hamlets Ridge. Here they were held up by machine-gun fire from the crest and from the neighbouring Veldhoek Ridge. But North Country troops, which meanwhile had carried the whole of Inverness Copse, had beaten off a counter-attack, and gone on to capture Veldhoek, relieved the battalions struggling on the Tower Hamlets slopes from the ordeal of enfilading fire, and enabled them to get to the crest and stay there. Left of the North-country division were the Australians, whose tradition it was to go forward always as far as their flanking divisions could support them, and they justified it by earrying what was left of Glencorse Wood, and by taking Polygon Wood village, and a very awkward corner of the German third line, which had been a thorn in the attacking side, By midday the ivestern portion of Polygon Wood had been cleared, not without a fierce

¹ The gain here was extended in September.

from them, were conducted in the neigh- struggle between bomb and machine-gun; bourhood of the disputed Menin road and the Second Army front had advanced

The Fifth Army had done its work as well. Scottish and South African battalions advancing on either side of the railway, reduced the fortified farms, which were the foremost line of the German defences, and pressed on to take the redoubts in front of Zonnebeke and the defences of Zevenhote, Three hours' determined fighting put this wing in possession of the lines assigned to it. The task of the West Lancashire men south and east of St. Julien was more protracted: the ground was in the condition usual after heavy rains, but the advance was well shepherded by the artillery, and by the afternoon the task was done, an hour or so after London and Highland territorials had broken down the resistance of the fortified farms and concrete pill-boxes north of the road from Langemarck to Zonnebeke. The new methods of artillery preparation. and of advance in narrow depth, had been justified; the whole of the high ground crossed by the Menin road, which had been withheld despite the previous efforts to master it, passed into British possession. and the advance on the right wing towards Tower Hamlets had proved a deciding factor in securing the gains on the left.

Both in its tactics, and in its prosecution, the attack was a success, and the best testimony to its extent was the determination and number of the German efforts to recover the lost ground. As before, the enemy strength had been reserved for the counterattack, but eleven such enterprises were repelled by the fire of the British supports, which had come up immediately on the heels of the assault, and others were broken up by the artillery, which had been brought to bear in conformity with the advance. East of St. Julien, one of these counterattacks, the third, drove back the British temporarily, but the Germans were not in sufficient force to sustain themselves, and were in turn driven out again during the ensuing twenty-four hours. The struggle of counter-attack and counter-attack went on north-east of Langemarck for three days; that at Polygon Wood and the Tower Hamlets Ridge for five. But by 25th September the ground won had been firmly consolidated, and the German counter-attacks had added considerably in their killed and wounded to the total of 3000 prisoners they had lost in the first assault.

Altogether, the 20th September thrust may be said to have been one of the high-water marks of the British autumn campaign, and by the excellence of its methods had obliged the German Head-quarters Staff to reconsider its methods of elastic defence. A testimony to its value not less striking was that the assaulting force was ready to renew the push as soon as the last German counterattack had been repelled. On 26th September an assault was driven home on a front extending 6 miles, roughly from St. Julien (north) to Tower Hamlets (south): but it was the 5 miles north of the Menin road on which it was pressed, so as to secure a jumping-off ground for the subsequent struggle for that position of the main ridge inclining towards Passchendaele. The fighting in this attack was harder. As usual, when the pieces for a problem were all set, and surprise was no longer possible, the German defence could only be smothered by superior fighting material, for their tactics were as good as those of any opponent. Sir Douglas Haig had some incomparable fighting material; the Australians, for example, who on this occasion carried all that was left of Polygon Wood, and reached the road that winds below the ridge from Beceleare to Zonnebeke; and not inferior to them, the English, Scottish, and Welsh divisions, which had repelled the last German counter-attack of the preceding day, and now broke through the resistance of the fortified farms and posts in front of them, relieving, in their foot-byfoot advance, two companies of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who had been marooned in the forward line all the previous night. Zonnebeke village and church were taken in the northern sector of the attack, and beyond them northwards a long stretch of the concrete fortifications, all by English troops, mainly Londoners and Midlanders.

There were far more killed than prisoners (who numbered fewer than 2000); and the suggested reason was that the attack anticipated another series of German counterattacks, which were now sent in, belated but urgent. Seven such attacks were delivered on 27th September against the whole of the new British positions. They were fiercest in the hollow of the ridge through which the Reutelbeek runs south of Polygon Wood; but they were beaten off, and their cessation was probably due to the disorganization into which the arrangements for them had been thrown by the surprise attack. They were begun again three days later in a more concerted manner, with the expectation of, at least, disconcerting future surprises, and went on till 3rd October. It is the best testimony to the efficiency with which the British battle machinery was workingthough admittedly at a high cost—that it was by that date ready and able to repeat its movement. East of Polygon Wood and Zonnebeke it was at the foot of the ridge.

The front of the principal attack, which extended from the Menin road, 7 miles northwards to the Ypres-Staden railway near Poelcapelle, was intended to take the crest positions of the ridge. A short stretch of German positions was simultaneously attacked on the southern side of the road. A day of fierce fighting followed (4th October), for the Germans, revising their plan of emptying their forward positions, had 2 divisions in line and 3 fresh divisions behind them, which had been brought up for a strong counter-attack. This counterattack our artillery barrage anticipated by ten minutes, falling on the massing German infantry, disorganizing the German barrage, and allowing the British assaulters to get to close quarters while the defenders were still shaken by the unexpected. On the right and centre of the attack where this took place, the results were apparent not merely in the. gain of positions, but in the large numbers of prisoners taken, amounting to over 5000, and in the absence of any immediate serious counter-attacks following on the action over the greater part of the front.

The numbers and dispositions of the enemy, not less than the strength of their defences, made the British victory a hard-fought one notwithstanding. On the night of the attack, Polderhoek Château, Reutel

the ground did not often favour these ma- favourable weather might occur. chines. Still farther south, where the attack Unfortunately, as Sir Douglas Haig says broken up before they got under way.

village, and the German zarebas east of fensive organization, and were prepared Polygon Wood, were captured only by the to resist to the last. In the wisdom of after determination of those English and Scottish events it is easy now to see that with the fighters who took them. They did a great promise of the earlier year wrecked in the share of the heavy work, but the division Russian collapse, and in the French incomwhich, advancing across the crest of the plete achievement on the Chemin-des-ridge, taking the village of Noordenhock as Dames, it would have been wiser to let well its last prize, had an easy task. A fourth of alone. On the other hand, there was a the English counties, with some of the rising scale of success in the attacks which Scottish, were represented in the endeavour. the British Second and Fifth Armies had Nor was the Australian and New Zealand delivered; and the mere fact that, though advance a light task, dashing as it appeared, the circumstances of attack had so often been The Anzaes between them took the Graven- unpropitious, the German ability to resist stafel Spur, bombing the Germans out of them seemed to be lessening was a temptatheir trenches here, and stormed Mole- tion to pursue the offensive. The intention narrelsthock and Broodseinde, finally estab- of the French to deliver yet another attack lishing themselves well beyond the crest road on the Chemin-des-Dames (at Malmaison). from Becclaere to Passchendaele. Farther which would consequently benefit from the north, the valley of the flooded Stroombeeke continuance of the British operations, seems was erossed through the mud by South to have outweighed the probability that Midlanders, and Poelcappelle was encircled, there would be not enough time to complete and in part stormed, by other English troops, the capture of the Passchendaele section of Tanks were used for Poelcappelle, though the ridge, and the possibility that the un-

was weaker, the ground made was slight, in his dispatch, the unfavourable weather though the fighting was hard; and in the did supervene to prejudice the joint Francoextreme south, where limited objectives had British attack, which, in spite of the doubts been assigned, the same situation obtained. as to its wisdom, he decided to launch on Though the vigour of the assault, and the the oth of October. The front of assault time happily chosen for it, had erippled the comprised 6 miles of British forces, from German counter-attack organization, they Zonnebeke to north of Poelcappelle station, had not paralysed it, and a succession of and a lesser stretch of French troops farther heavy onsets between the Menin road and north to Draaibank. The best part of the Reutel dislodged the Scottish Borderers advance was made on the Allied left, where from Polderhoek Château, and the North French and British (Guards) divisions Countrymen from part of Reutel, at the crossed the flooded valley of the Broenbeck, eighth attempt. Other counter-attacks were and, capturing with steady irresistibility a number of farm-houses and fortified posts, It might have been well to rest content as well as woods and small villages, estabwith the positions and advantages which the lished themselves finally on the outskirts of grip on the ridge, secured by the 4th October Houthulst Forest. It was a step forward attack, had given the Second and Fifth of a mile and a half through the flat fortified Armies. Sir Douglas Haig observes that country. But as the line farther south with the holding on the ridge, and the pos- approached the ridge position the going besession of the Gravenstafel Spur at its ex- came ever harder. On the right of the tremity, a position had been obtained on Guards, the English division in the centre which the British could rest with security, forced its way to a line well to the east of the long-standing menace to the Ypres the road from Houthulst to Poeleappelle; but salient obliterated. There were sound the other troops, which fought through reasons for doing so; the year was far spent; Poelcappelle itself, and the Australians and the Germans had now solidified their de- English who carried the line up the slopes



AMONG THE "IRON DIVISIONS" OF THE FRENCH ARMY

German shrapnel bursting behind a hastily-built berricade



towards Passchendaele and the main ridge, purchased their ground dearly.

A number of points were nevertheless captured, as well as two villages, and a subsidiary feature of the attack, the recapture of Reutel, helped to round off an operation which must be described as a success, though it was neither an easy nor a cheap one. Some 2000 prisoners were taken, but the general course of the action had strengthened the British Commander-in-Chief's conviction that the best that could be done in Flanders for that year had already been done; and that, though by limited attacks it might be practicable to extend a hold on the ridge as far as Passchendaele, no further large scale attack was worth its expenditure. A continuance of pressure was justifiable chiefly for the purpose of keeping the Germans occupied here, and of masking that surprise at Cambrai which had been suggested as likely to promise good and, possibly, noteworthy results. Accordingly, limited operations were continued in Flanders; and they could not be continued without sacrifice. It was the losses entailed in these truncated attacks which contributed more than anything else to the widespread feeling that a large part of the later British campaign in Flanders had been unnecessary butting through mud and blood to an end which led

A very brief spell of fine weather in the nowhere. last week of October gave illusive promise to an attack planned on a front extending between the two parallel railways from Ypres. Rain on the morning of the attack (26th October) reduced the prospects of any cheap success to the lowest possible likelihood; and the task of the Canadian division, brought up from Lens, in making its way up the valley of the Ravebeek on either side of the stream was one for heroes. The Canadians lost heavily from the machine-guns on the small hill south of Passchendaele, and at the Bellevue Spur, where they strove to work round the village. It took them the whole day to reach their goal; and their losses were galling. So also were those of the London Territorials and the Naval Division, who advanced through the craters and pitfalls of the flooded and

marshy ground on their left. Men who fell in these attacks had little chance of succour, for they stood the double risk of death by enemy fire, and death by drowning. Perhaps the most relevant testimony to the conditions under which this, and similar attacks, were made at this period, is that a battalion of English troops which simultaneously reentered Ghehuvelt and Polderhoek Château could not repel a German counter-attack because their rifles were choked with mud.

A French attack, in co-operation with the Belgians, on this day and the following two, conquered the difficulties of advance over the flooded area of the St. Jansbeek, and cleared the whole of the Merckem peninsula. There were but two more advances this year in the same area, by the first of which, on 30th October, the Canadian and British divisions engaged in the attack of the 26th renewed their attempt on a slightly shorter line. Again the London and Naval Divisions ploughed their way through the mud; again the Canadians fought tooth and nail to win the goal of Passchendaele. They reached the outskirts, and on the spur west of it beat off five German efforts to dislodge them. The reward of their tenacity came to the Canadians a week later, on 6th November, when in one final, almost anguished, effort they won the right to put the name of Passchendaele on the flags of their regiments by capturing the village and the high ground immediately north and north-west of it. The hold on the ridge where this strong-

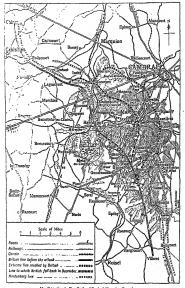
hold stood was consolidated on subsequent days, but Passchendaele, with its toll of men's lives sacrificed to obtain it, and its dubious value, must stand as the emblem of the latter part of the Flanders campaign of 1917. Sir Douglas Haig most truly describes it as an offensive maintained for three and a half months under the most adverse conditions of weather, entailing almost superhuman exertions on the part of the troops of all arms and services. The greatest tribute to it was not the number of its prisoners, though these reached 25,000 together with 75 guns, nor the ground captured, though much of it was of the highest tactical value, but in the fact that 78 German divisions had been employed from first to the defence.

poured out in Flanders, an attack was being operation was offered, should the necessity stealthily prepared by the Third Army (Sir arise. It is significant that the action as Julian Byng) in the neighbourhood of Cam- planned, and as carried out, did not involve brai, behind which the Germans were ever the French armies. strengthening the laboured ramparts of their tacked.

Bourlon and eastwards which would be a was held up: the Tanks which came up to

last in holding back assaulting columns of perpetual threat to Cambrai-the essential British divisions which at times had to supply-junction of the German army of von struggle through mud, waist high, to reach Below. Cambrai itself was not, and was not believed to be, within the reach of any While the last grains of effort were being attack such as was proposed. French co-

The secrecy with which the attack was Siggfried lines. Several reasons contributed prepared received the best tribute to its to Sir Douglas Haig's consent to deliver a completeness in the immediate success obblow here: the chief of which was that the tained by the assaulting columns, and by redistribution of German forces, as the result the undiluted surprise of the Germans. The of divisions brought from, or exchanged with, Tanks went forward in the dark morning of the quiescent Russian front, as well as of 20th November unheralded by any bomthose which would be available when the bardment and taking great "fascines" of autumn campaign of the British and French brushwood with them for crossing trenches; ceased, was not yet being made. Another the infantry followed them along the lanes reason was that owing to the Caporetto they had cut in the wire, and were into the disaster Italy was clamouring for French and German first positions before the machine-British assistance, to be rendered directly gun posts awakened to the situation. Then, or indirectly. It was judged, and rightly while the German artillery sent in a stragjudged, to be probable that a surprise attack gling and dilatory barrage into the wrong on a defined and limited scale might be place, the deliberately retarded British barundertaken at some weakened section of the rage lifted into the German support trenches. German line, and might secure good results By the time it was light the first line German in the forty-eight hours before the German defences had been smothered, and the organization could reinforce the sector at- infantry, preceded by machine-gunning aeroplanes, advanced to the reserve line. Here The sector chosen was one where the the advantages of the preliminary surprise British had a good position from which to were melting. The division (12th Eastern), attack, namely, at that section of the Sieg- moving on the right of the attack, found fried (Hindenburg) line which ran from east German batteries strongly posted in Lateau of Gonnelieu to the Canal du Nord, opposite Wood, and not to be rushed. They were Hermies. In front of the German main subdued by the aid of Tanks, and captured line there were forward positions, including after they had been served for some hours. La Vacquerie, and a corner of Havrincourt While the fight for Lateau Wood was pro-Wood. Behind the Hindenburg front line longed, the division on the left of the Eastern were other systems-the Hindenburg Re- division, which had taken La Vacquerie as serve, the Beaurevoir, Masnières, and Mar- its share of the surprise, was busy with the quion lines. The general idea of the attack defences of Welsh Ridge. The 6th Division was to burst through by the aid of Tanks carried the streets of Ribecourt; the 62nd without employing any artillery preparation went through Havrincourt. Then came onc to give warning; and if a break should be of the spokes in the wheel. The gist thereby made, to pass through it cavalry, Division, a famous fighting unit, had to whose mission should be to do the largest advance up Flesquieres Hill; and at Flesamount of damage to the enemy's communi- quieres Château was a brick wall which cations in the shortest possible time. Other- sheltered the Germans' best arm-the wise the tactical object of the break-through machine-gunners-while other machine-guns was to secure, if possible, a position from enfiladed the advance to it. The division



Map illustrating the Pirst Battles of Cambrisi, Nevember-December, 1917

NOTE.—Hill shading is shown only in the new covered by the aphere of the operations described

taken.

taken the passages over the Canal de tling for Moeuvres at the close of the day. l'Eseaut by which the cavalry was to be a number of its men, threw, by its gallantry battle-field was unavoidable.

captured; some 5000 prisoners, and a large the 51st Division. On the other side of

help them could not completely expedite the number of guns, had been taken. But for time-table, and several were caught by direct the mishaps indicated the gains might have hits from the German batteries, one of which, been on a larger scale and of a different comspecially mentioned in British dispatches, plexion. There yet remained a possible was served till its last man, an officer, fell at twenty-four hours before German reinhis gun. Flesquières village remained un- forcements could arrive in force, in which to improve on what had been won. Fles-There were many individual exploits, quieres was attacked at dawn of the 21st The Durhams, on this side of the attack, and eaptured, as was Masnières, and when charged a battery and took seven guns, and that was secured a hand was laid on the the Ulster Division (36th) captured a spoil- Beaurevoir-Masnières defensive line to the bank on the side of the Canal du Nord, and north. But already the sands of the hours subsequently marched with West Riding of immunity from counter-attack were run-Yorkshiremen (62nd Division) past Havrin- ning out; the German main communications court and the Hindenburg Reserve line, had been left intact, and, indeed, untouched. ultimately earrying all the trench systems as Though the British captured Les Rues-desfar as the Bapaume-Cambrai road. Except Vignes it could not be held against reinforcethe cheek at Flesquières, everything seemed ments coming up; and at Rumilly, Novelles, to be going by elockwork, including the and in the region cast of the canal, the proseavalry, which was moving up behind the pects of advance faded hourly. On the other infantry. But then eame the second spoke side of the wedge the outlook was more prosin the wheel, more damaging than Fles- perous, Anneux, Cantaing, Fontaine-Notrequières. The 29th Division, on the right Dame, and the outskirts of Bourlon Wood of the bulge which the attack had driven in, were reached by the 51st and 62nd Divisions, had entered Masnières and Marcoing, and and farther west the 36th Division was bat-

The point of the British wedge had not loosed on to the enemy's communications, reached Bourlon Wood, and its sides were At Marcoing they arrived just in time to beginning to feel pressure at the end of the prevent the destruction of the bridge by second day. The problem before the Combeing blown up; at Masnières the bridge mander-in-Chief was whether to permit the was partially destroyed, and one of our own local commander to carry on, and attempt Tanks fell through in crossing it. Conse- to force Bourlon Wood, and so secure perquently, the cavalry never crossed the canal manently a high ground position which at all-except a small Canadian detachment would overlook the valleys of the Sensée (Fort Garry Horse) which got over on a and the Scarpe, or whether the ground should temporary bridge and did good work. Its be abandoned and a possibly costly action success, which cost it most of its horses, and be refused. Sir Douglas Haig seems to have halted between the two decisions, but and resource, the ineffectiveness of the great finally to have adopted the worse one, which body of the British eavalry into darker relief, was to try to improve the victory won, in Sir Douglas Haig's dispatch blames no one; the confidence that the Germans would be but he remarks that the delay of the guns unable to evict his forces. Bourlon Wood among the sunken roads of this part of the was duly taken (23rd), though not without four and a half hours' costly fighting; and a In spite of the failure of such hopes as more pressing hint that trouble was brewing were dependent on cavalry action, the in- for the British was the circumstance that fantry and Tanks had done everything ex- Fontaine-Notre-Dame, which was on the pected of them. Three German defensive right of the position, and had been reckoned systems drawn over a depth of country of on to buttress our holding, could not be more than 4 miles had been broken and cleared of the enemy, even by the efforts of

Bourlon, however, Tadpole Copse, an outlier of Moeuvres, had been taken.

The increasing difficulties at Bourlon, and at Fontaine-Notre-Dame, found replicas in the increasing frequency of German counter-attacks, and the stiffening of German resistance all over the face of the salient that the British attack had created. Bourlon village was taken twice, on 24th and 27th November (62nd Division), but it could not be held, and at Tadpole Copse the struggle became severer. On the 27th the Guards Division was sent in to capture the ridge dominating Bourlon and Fontaine-Notre-Dame—the 62nd Division co-operating. The ridge and the villages were captured, but neither could be held. It was clear by the end of November that the 10,000 German prisoners taken were the utmost extent of the British prize, and that the Bourlon salient could be held only by an expenditure of men and energy in which the Germans were not likely to be outmatched.

It furthermore became evident that the Germans, who indeed made no secret of their intentions, were preparing to do their best to deprive the British Third Army of more than its gains. In the circumstances, since retreat from the position was almost as difficult as holding it, the best that could be done was to stiffen the Third Army's right flank from Cantaing to the Banteux Ravine. Five divisions were put in for this purpose, with other divisions-Guards, 62nd, and the 2nd Cavalry Division, which had been dismounted to fight at Bourlon Wood. Other divisions were sent for; the divisional commanders from Villers Guislain southwards were warned, and most reasonable provisions seemed to have been taken. The one factor which could not be discounted in advance was the German military ability, when faced with a problem of this kind, namely a tired army in unconsolidated defences, to solve it in a satisfactory manner,

They did so solve it, and, plagiarizing the British surprise of 20th November, launched their heavy counter-stroke on the British right flank from Vendhuille to Masnières with the briefest possible bombardment. The sectors in which the surprise was most complete, and in which battery commanders

were thunderstruck at finding Germans behind, instead of in front of them, were those of the Bonavis Ridge and Gonnelieu. The Germans swarmed here almost without a check, and it may be admitted that in the dismay of surprise some defending units made no resistance at all. All the more credit is reflected on the 20th Division on the Masnières front, which, though taken in reverse by being left in the air as a division south of it gave way, fought all day and kept its lines intact. There were other instances of bravery and good fighting: the 92nd Field Artillery, the troops east of Villers Guislain, 2 Lancashire battalions, provided examples of isolated gallantry. But they did not avail to stave off the loss of the Bonavis Ridge, Gonnelieu, Villers Guislain, and, next morning, Gouzeaucourt. The disaster was considerable; a limit was put to it next day when the Guards and part of the 29th Division, and artillery of the 47th Division-straight off the march—began to restore the situation.

It must, however, be recorded in respect of this German success that it was localized even in the chosen battle-field. The attacks on other sectors, especially on the whole of the northern area from Fontaine-Notre-Dame round the salient to Tadpole Copse, were of an entirely different character, and had entirely different results. At the end of the day the British line, in spite of attacks many times renewed, stood where it had fought, and, fighting where it stood, had inflicted far heavier losses than it had sustained. The struggle continued next day, but by that time the Third Army had begun to counter-attack. Gonnelieu and the St. Quentin Ridge were temporarily retaken. German attacks on Marcoing, Fontaine-Notre-Dame, and Bourlon were repelled. Nevertheless, it was palpable that the British position, undermined as it was by the piercing of its eastern flank, was placed in a very unfavourable position for resisting future attack, and the Commander-in-Chief gave orders for the gradual reduction, by retreat, of the occupied salients. Gonnelieu and La Vacquerie were abandoned, and a further German thrust towards Welsh Ridge determined a still further concentration of the

lines. On the night of 4th-5th December 11,000 prisoners and 145 guns, and the Bourlon Wood was evacuated, and all the losses of its own men and guns, captured in ground north of Flesquières Ridge was the German counter-stroke ten days afterrelinquished. The retirement was skilfully wards, diminished the value, but did not conducted with very little incidental loss, alter the character of the achievement. The To sum up the results of the enterprise: "Battle of Cambrai" was an incomplete the British Third Army captured 7 miles success, but a fitting crown to the British of German front line, and a rather lesser Western campaign of 1917, which had been length of the second reserve line, with three continuous for seven and a half months, villages included. Flesquières, Ribecourt, with the smallest possible breaks, and had and Havrincourt. Its captures numbered captured 70,000 prisoners and over 500 guns.

CHAPTER XII

THE FRENCH CAMPAIGN OF 1917

break through at the weakened sectors of Petain's task was finished there. the German front.

A rather notorious interview, which triumph of the younger school, appeared in some French newspapers at the

The reassurance which had come to the of similar or greater suecesses-as, perhaps, French people, after the triumphant reaction the interview was intended to do. But the at Verdun in 1916, sought to find a new general feeling in France at the beginning military policy and a new director of it. of 1917 was that the French armies could Marshal Joffre, after the one expensive be led to decisive victory-if the time, the offensive in Champagne in 1915, had fallen place, the leader, were well chosen. This back on a method of defensive fighting, which belief did not regard Marshal Toffre as the was based on the sound understanding that heaven-sent leader. The natural successor, it was his duty to menager les hommes, to if he retired, was General Foeh, and Foch's husband French resources, till the British motto of "Attack! Attack!-and again armies were in a position to act as reserves Attackl" would, it might have seemed, to be entirely depended on. The tenacity satisfy any advocate of a forward military of the British army on the Somme, and the policy. But General Foch was at that time definite adoption of conscription in Great a little out of the public eye, and out of Britain, were sufficient evidence that both political favour, as he confided to his friend in point of ability and numbers this depend- M. Clemenceau; and both he and General able reserve was present; and the course of Pétain were passed over in favour of the the war in 1917 gave, in fact, ample proof former colonel of artillery who had risen to of it. It was indeed said, with some justice, the rank of brigadier-general at the Battle that the Germans were restrained from of the Aisne, and as divisional commander throwing all their weight on the French line under General Castelnau, and subsequently in the effort to break it because they were as corps commander under General Pétain, aware that while they were thus fully occu- had made his way upwards to the compied, the British would be able similarly to mand of the army of Verdun, when General appointment of General Nivelle was the

General Nivelle stood for the French beginning of 1917, and in which Sir Douglas strategic plan of aiming a blow at the Ger-Haig was reported to have said that the man centre. In striking at the Vimy Ridge British could break through the German the British army in 1917 was taking a step line if that were its object, gave colour to the to reduce the north-western pillar of the belief that the French army was also capable geographical position on which the Germans

rested their lines of defence across northern France. The corresponding bastion in the south, and one of much greater extent and far less accessible, is the La Fère-Laon position. La Fère and Laon are situated at the northern spur of the Falaise de Champagne, a semicircle of low hills separating the plains of Champagne from the great plateau north of the Aisne. Rising from this river between Soissons and Berry-au-Bac are a number of rugged and thickly wooded heights, culminating in the forests of Coucy and St. Gobain. These are the most formidable obstacles to any thrust made northwards to cross the St. Gobain massif. The plan which offers most prospects of success is to thrust up the valley of the River Ailette, which, rising northwest of Craonne, flows nearly parallel to the Aisne before reaching the Oise, which it joins. A canal joins the Aisne to the Ailette at Chavigny.

Before the valley of the Ailette can be commanded, it is necessary to conquer the Chemin - des - Dames, an historic roadway roughly parallel to the Aisne, and running along the crest of the ridge 3 miles north of the river. Part of General Nivelle's plan was, therefore, the subjugation of the Chemin-des-Dames, as a preliminary to the domination of the Ailette valley, and an advance towards Laon, where the Laon-La-Fère position would be turned. It was a sufficiently ambitious plan, too ambitious, as M. Painlevé, subsequently called upon to explain to the French Chamber its failure, admitted; and it was not all the plan. But General Nivelle had, at the beginning of 1917, great confidence that the hour had struck when the war of the trenches could be exchanged for the war of manœuvre, and that if the whole weight of French endeavour and French artillery were thrown at some extended sector of the German lines, a fracture must be made somewhere. It had nearly been done in 1915 over a short front; in 1917 the British were ready to co-operate by drawing away part of the German resources. At the conference of November, 1916, the British Commander-in-Chief had decided to strike a blow at the German right flank as the British share in the campaign, and had consented to begin the spring offensive with the Arras attack. This plan, though it substituted two parallel blows at widely-separated sectors for blows struck along neighbouring sectors, or in concert, was regarded as satisfying to General Nivelle, who accordingly prosecuted his plans independently—as one should perhaps say, instead of inter-independently.

General Nivelle's plan was to enlarge an offensive to 50 miles, leaving the Germans to guess where its greatest weight would be placed, but leaving himself with the opportunity of breaking through on either wing of an attack which stretched from Soissons to Rheims. It was evident that the best results would be obtained by a great success at the western end of the line, where the opportunity would be afforded to press on towards Laon; but if something less than this were obtained, and the Germans were compelled to mass their greatest forces of resistance towards Soissons and the Chemindes-Dames, then it was possible that a signal advantage might be gained by piercing their lines at the eastern end of the 50-mile front towards Berry-au-Bac and Rheims.

It may be said at once that the time of preparation was too short; that the artillery with which to support it was insufficient; the difficulties underrated, and the plan too grandiose. The Germans had realized the year before the power of a defence over a much shorter front; the French organization and artillery were no better than that of their opponents, and, in the view of experience which was gathered then, and afterwards, it seems probable now that even had the whole of the British and French forces been united under one leader to strike one blow the time was not ripe for its success. Neither General Mangin nor General Micheler was in favour of the plan, and General Haig also dissented. Its success was further prejudiced by the withdrawal of the German lines in the spring of 1917, of which General Franchet d'Espérey's warning had been ignored by General Nivelle.

On the day preceding General Nivelle's attack the French line ran as follows:—from La Fère on the Oise round the edges of the forests of Gobain and Coucy to the Ailette, passing through Quincy on the northern and

held by the Germans. From Troyon the Aisne for some distance, and then converging to cross it again at Berry-au-Bac, and proceed southwards and eastwards to Rheims below the heights of Nogent l'Abbesse and the Moronvilliers Ridge, to the River Suippe.

The Chemin-des-Dames Ridge, as a position, may be compared to a forearm and a fist, the knuckles of which-the spurs of the Aisne heights-are most difficult at the western end. The French held part of the Vregny plateau, which was opposite one of the spurs. Nanteuil-la-Fosse, and so were in villages on the river, Condé, Celles, Vailly, as well as those in the crevices of the spurs. the Soupir and Moussy spurs, besides the mans who had stopped it. post at Troyon and a good way up to Braye. The artillery preparation had been long But the knuckles called for an assault on and severe, lasting from 6th to 16th April, both their western and castern forces- but losing some of the effectiveness of cres-12 miles of the most unassailable kind of cendo which had been designed for it through fortress forming a better situated Verdun, rain and bad visibility. Rain and snow fell and better fortified, for the Germans had heavily before the attack, and the clouds

Vauxaillon on the river's southern bank. East of this tremendous position was the Thence it passed west of Laffaux and Mar- hog's-back plateau narrowing at Hurtebise gival and crossed the Aisne, of which it Farm, widening at Craonelle, narrowing again left 8 miles, from Condé to Chavonne, in at the eastern extremity, where the Cali-German possession. Behind this 8 miles fornia and Casemates plateau positions look was the key position of the Fort Condé, down on Craonne. The slopes are very and the beginnings of the wooded spurs steep, but the difficulties not so immense which constitute the heights of the Aisne, as at the western end. The German posi-Where the line recrossed the river and tion east of the Chemin-des-Dames Ridge the French stood on the north side of it, it fell from the high ground of fortified Craonne passed Soupir and Moussy and a post above to a marshy plain broken only by the low Troyon on the great hog's-back ridge which, hills of Ville-aux-Bois. Then, after the with its road, is called the Chemin-des- crossing of the Aisne at Berry-au-Bac, more Dames. The post had long ago remained flat country, with the heights of Brimont and a relic of the Battle of the Aisne, and of Fresne standing out from it and bristling the part which Haig's corps played in it. with German defences. Then came the The whole of the rest of the ridge, from Nogent l'Abbesse cluster, and the Moron-Laffaux Mill and Allemant to Craonne, was villiers massif east of Rheims. Nivelle's plan was to attack the great Chemin-des-French line went off the ridge parallel to the Dames position west and east and south, getting into it anywhere he could while bursting into the Champagne plain on the low ground below it, between Craonne and the Brimont defences. That was the programme for 16th April. The next day another army was to attack the Moronvilliers heights on the other side of Rheims as a separate project.

If an historian of this enormous undertaking were to say that it broke down at the outset, he would convey a false impression. for the French by desperate effort gained good position to assault it. The other spurs, some remarkable successes in a struggle Fort de Condé, Vailly Spur, had the most which lasted from 16th April to 5th May. of the Aisne in front of them: and all the But the summary description would have a great deal of truth in it, for the first day scaled the fate of the attack as a decision; Aizy, Ostel, Sancy, Braye, were outer or and the last left the Allies on the Western inner bastions of the greater ridge fortress. Front with Germany in a position where it If the ridge could have been carried at the seemed extremely unlikely that she could western end the whole of the rest must have be beaten. When, the suggestion of political fallen. The eastern half of the knuckles was interference having been made, M. Painmore vulnerable, because the French had levé was questioned as to who had "stopped" already a footing on the eastern slopes of the attack, he replied that it was the Ger-

not been there three years doing nothing. Were gathering when the first assault was





GENERAL DEBENEY

From a photograph



MARSHAL PÉTAIN ·
From a phongraph by Meley



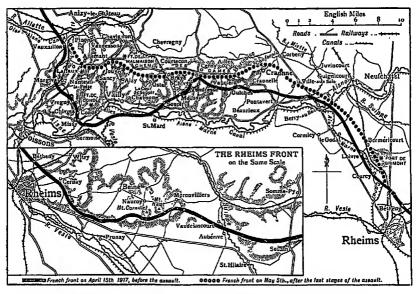
From a phongs aph by Henri Manuel



GENERAL DÉGOUTTE From a photograph

delivered near the forest of Coucy, and was followed by the assault of a French colonial division at Laffaux. The division reached Vauxaillon and Laffaux, but could hold neither; the German counter-attack was immediate and effective. On the eastern side of the knuckle-like spurs of the great ridge the attack proceeded in a series of pulses, successive and sometimes parallel, so as to hold the Germans in suspense as to the point at which the greatest effort would be

were sent to conquer these positions, and the result was to show that the defences were practically unassailable by swift assault. The bombardment, as was afterwards found, had killed many of the Germans who garrisoned the quarries, the trenches, the woods; and many of the defences had been blown to dust; but the strength of the position had hardly been reduced. Both divisions, their first objectives gained, were held up at the foot of one of the cliff-like pro-



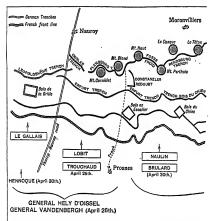
Map illustrating the French Attack on the Chemin-des-Dames Ridge, April 15-May 5, 1917

directed. General Nivelle did not press the frontal attack where the Germans had the Aisne to help them, but directed his effort on the ridge from Chavonne to Craonne. The capture of Chavonne was a necessary preliminary to the frontal attack, and its capture, together with that of the Soupir Ridge, would make the task of throwing the Germans back over the Aisne possible; without Chavonne such an effort would be abortive. The Germans had naturally fortified Chavonne to the teeth, and the cliffs behind it and behind Soupir village were pitted with caves and quarries, improved by tunnels, trenches, and wire.

Two French divisions of Mangin's army

jections called Les Grinons. A battalion of the left-hand division burst its way through Chavonne, and struggled on to the support-trench system which, if carried, would have unlocked the gate to Les Grinons. But the desperate rush was rendered futile by a German counter-attack. On the right hand of the attack a Chasseur battalion did better, for it bombed its way through the support trenches, sealed the position of Mont Sapin, and spread fanwise towards Les Grinons and Mont Soupir, a truly remarkable feat which it crowned by holding off the German counter-attack and maintaining its own position. This feat was supported by others less remarkable, but useful, which hir: the left-hand one badly mauled.

gave the 2 divisions a footing on the slopes section of the assault, having run the gauntlet of Les Grinons, in Chavonne, and the of the German fire over the marshy ground approaches to Mont Soupir, as well as the below Craonne, won a footing in the ruins actual possession of two lesser fortified of that place. The French communiqué heights. But the assault as a whole had been at the end of the day claimed that all the firstheld up, both divisions had been very hard line German positions had been captured, which was true. The German communiqué



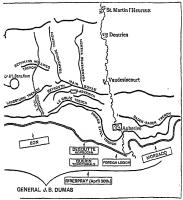
Diagrammatic Representation of the Battle of Moronvilliers, April 17-May 20, 1917-continued on the opposite page

foothold above Troyon, and on a wide front was worse, very dispiriting. between that point and Craonne. The This assault was but one half of the scale of the assault demanded 2 army corps, Nivelle design. The other half of it em-The highest point of the ridge was reached, braced the thrust east of Craonne in the flat Hurtebise Farm, and the most easterly lands towards Juvincourt and Ville-aux-Bois,

Three hours or less after this assault had declared that assaults at most points on gone forward others were directed at the the ridge had been bloodily repulsed, which Chemin-des-Dames Ridge itself, up the also was true. The losses at Laffaux and spur between Braye and Chivy, from the old Chayonne had been very heavy, and what

were the Bois des Buttes and the Bois des French type were a failure. Boches (Ville-aux-Bois). South of the Aisne South of Berry-au-Bae and the Aisne, the

and extended southwards beyond Berry-au- Dames was demolished, and there could be Bac to Bermericourt, and a point on the no break through. The prospect was Aisne-Marne Canal opposite Brimont. The reduced to that of a methodical advance. salient points at which the assault was The French artillery support in this sector directed between Craonne and the Aisne was not heavy enough. The Tanks of



sentation of the Buttle of Meromilliers, April 17-May 20, 1917—continued from the opposite page

and Berry-au-Bac were the corresponding attack on the Brimont heights, which was Brimont obstacles, which Nivelle hoped to to proceed by turning them at Berméricourt win by carrying Berméricourt and Loivre, and Loivre, had a more encouraging success. On the north of the Aisne a famous Paris A French division, operating from Le Godat, regiment (21st Infantry) took by assault the swarmed over the German front-line trenches. Bois des Buttes by six hours work, but could fought its way through the wood behind, and not turn the Bavarians out of Ville-aux-Bois. reached Berméricourt, spreading thence As Craonne was still German, neither pillar along the railway to Loivre, where it ioined of the defence between the Chemin-des- hands with another unit of the division which had broken into and taken this forti- marched down from it on Ostel, intercepting

pouring rain of the next day (17th, when the surmounted. The position of the easterly front of assault was extended to Moronvil- half of Nivelle's attack, in the plains, showed liers) to improve the ground won by throwing an improvement on that of the previous day, in reinforcements. The fighting ability of The Paris regiment completed its task at the French poilu was never better demon- Ville-aux-Bois and the neighbouring wood; strated, not even at Verdun. The costly the Russians at Courcy pushed a little obstacle of Les Grinons, changing hands farther forward. It was significant, howmany times, was surmounted by dusk, and ever, that the Germans were able to launch its capture put the Germans in Chavonne a strong counter-attack from the neighbourin difficulties. The French also improved hood of Juvincourt. their hold of other points; but from Chavonne to Hurtebise, and from Craonne to their previous attacks at the western end of Courcy, there was a pause in the advance. but no pause in the fighting, for all day long left of prisoners and ruins after the German the Germans were in a position to react, and delivered many counter-attacks. But General Nivelle, true to his principles, had no intention of abandoning the initiative, and was bringing up reinforcements and advancing his artillery all day. On the 18th he let them loose on the German positions again. He won a success so striking, at the outset, that his plan almost seemed to have justified its cost. The infantry at Laffaux. protected by cavalry on their southern flank, broke through and crossed the plateau of Vregny and the valley beyond it, and finally slightly improved their positions on the stormed Nanteuil-la-Fosse on the adjacent eastern side of the 50-mile attack. Operations height.

one of Mangin's "Iron" divisions crossed time. the Aisne east of Condé, and, spreading east

fied village. A brigade of Russians, acting the Saxon regiments as they closed in. The in concert with this division, went forward. German salient south of the Aisne was thus to Courcy with great impetuosity, and in effect wiped out. The position of the despite severe losses (again complaint was garrison still holding the Fort de Condé was made of insufficient artillery support) took further worsened by the eapture of Brave and held the village and its château strong- and Chivy among the wooded spurs. A hold. The day's captures numbered 11,000. good deal of the difficult end of the Chemin-A very great effort was made in the des-Dames Ridge had thus been successfully

On the 19th the French reaped the fruit of the Chemin-des-Dames, taking what was garrison had blown up the Fort de Condé, and capturing also the last German remnants at Celles. By afternoon the French held the whole of the Aisne from the Oise to Berryau-Bae. On the ridge the Germans were retreating to second positions, which, as a matter of subsequent fact, were strong enough to hold the French from such complete command of the ridge as would enable them to advance beyond it. The French furthermore occupied Aizy and Jouy, took a few more prisoners at Hurtchise Farm, and of a similar kind, but slowing down further, The effect of this capture was to dominate occupied the next day. The French bolt the Germans in the Fort de Condé just had been shot; the Germans had recoiled north of the river, and make the whole under it, had lost men and ground in con-German position in the river salient pre- sequence, but were now closing up and carious. It was made more precarious when already counter-attacking to give themselves

To the French Commander-in-Chief there and west along the bank, gave helping hands was nothing left but to clear up. He had to other troops crossing at Vailly. Vailly not the men to prosecute an adventure which was occupied and held, the Saxon regiments in its opening stages had wrecked three of of its garrison retreating to the wooded the army's finest divisions. For three years heights, but retreating too late. For Cha- France had endured cruel losses; it was not vonne had been captured also on the eastern willing to risk more; and indeed the situation face of the group of spurs, and French troops was one which must have given pause to any

it is not likely, that had General Nivelle been Allies' favour. By the end of April it leaned able to send in another attack comparable heavily against the French, despite their with the first, he might have broken through captures of prisoners, for the destruction of at some point of the Germans battered front. the 3 divisions in the fighting of the first He took from them, in the fortnight which day was naturally but a fraction of the losses; ended on 28th April, 21,000 prisoners and by the end of the year it was probably against 175 guns; he had driven them back from the the Germans. Together with the endeavour Aisne, and had wrested from their hands to improve the Chemin-des-Dames positions some of the strongest positions on the was a scientific and carefully developed heights of the Aisne; but everywhere the advance on the Moronvilliers heights, the command of the position had been but half attack on which had begun on the second won. Though sections of the Chemin-des- day (17th April), and had been attended Dames Ridge were in French hands, the with limited success. That sector is best German strong positions behind the western treated as a whole and separately. end offered opportunities for very long The first new tactics at the Chemin-desdefence: Craonne was still in dispute, and Dames were put into operation on 4th-4th nor explained.

in counter-attacks as to make the balance capture of Ville-aux-Bois and its two heights. Vot. VI.

Allied statesman. It is conceivable, though of loss of men one that would be in the

therefore no eastwards push could be made. May. An attack was set in motion on a 21towards the plain between there and Ville- mile front in the plain below Craonne: and aux-Bois. From Ville-aux-Bois southwards, while this was in progress another assault, the German first- and second-line defences delivered on Craonne itself, succeeded by had been pierced, but there were other its daring. Two companies went right defences behind, and the Brimont heights through the ruins and reached the California were an insuperable obstacle. French mili- plateau beyond. There they stuck, despite tary opinion was against going on; the all efforts to crush them by gun-fire; and moral of the army had had too severe a strain they formed a nucleus for an extension of put on it; the civilians, as represented by the position. Next day a new French bomthe Chamber of Deputies, were appalled by bardment broke out all along the ridge from the losses. Finally, the situation at sea, Vauxaillon to Craonne; and then two where the German submarine campaign had furious but localized attacks were delivered achieved a success which was never publicly at either extremity of the position. That admitted, but which had eaused dismay to at Vauxaillon end was most bloody, for here, the stoutest optimists, was such that it would on the way to the Fort de Malmaison, were have been folly to take the risk of putting the systems of trenches interlacing the quarries last French stake on the table. In a word, of Fruty and Allemant, and forming grids of the Nivelle plan of campaign had failed, obstacles in front of and behind such vital The chief command was shortly afterwards points as Laffaux Mill, There was no way taken over temporarily by General Pétain, of holding a trench except by cleaning it up and about the middle of May by General with bombs, but the fighting had at any rate Foch. General Nivelle, a fine soldier and the advantage that the prize of victory went a man of the highest character and the most to the individualist. The fighting went on unassailable dignity, retired to a command over 5th May till Sunday, 6th May. By that in Algeria, and, true to the best traditions time the hill in front of Malmaison had been of the French army, neither excused himself all but won, yet not quite. Allemant quarries had been won and lost again: Laffaux Mill The rest of the story of the attack on the had been won and held. At the other end of Chemin-des-Dames is of a different charac- the ridge the holding at Craonne was extended ter. The French High Command having till a valuable stretch of the ridge as far as got a foothold, endeavoured so to secure Cerny was strongly gripped. By 6th May and improve it as to worsen the Germans' the forearm of the ridge was mainly composition, and compel them so to expend men manded by the French. Below it, by the

they had put a key in the lock of the topographically, it was amply parrisoned by plain of Loon, but had little prospect of 7 German divisions under General Muller

above Laffaux thence pursuing their battle Farm Bohers Quarry and Malmason Fort They ended on the Chevregny Spur The position was shaped like an oak leaf with ravines in between the serrations and the ravines had to be surmounted for while the Germans held the Mont des Singes fortifica tions the position could not be turned from undestroyed machine gun position. But the the west by a movement past Vauxaillon up programme was forced through and Mar the Atlette valley The position had to be joulet, wheeling round at Allemant to join

General Masstre was entrusted by General At this juncture the grand assault gave Petain with the task of surmounting the place to the scientific methodical advance caverned plateau with its four spirs with as planned by Petam and his school It may General Trunchet d'Espere, is adviser be conveniently, if not chronologically fol- Three army corps were employed in the lowed, by summarizing, firstly, the rest of enterprise That of General Marjoulet the year's operations on the Chemin-des (14th Army Corps) embraced the largest Dames After General Nivelle had stationed sector from below Vauvaillon to south of the French on the hog's back the Germans Allemant, it was committed to the task of for three and a half months never ceased to reaching the plateau at Allemant, which was dispute possession of the ground. On the therefore to be used as a pivot for assailing 18 miles front no fewer than 49 German the German support trenches on the nor divisions were put in and withdrawn, and them slopes of the ridge. The next corps from 20th August to 23rd October there were (21st), under General Degoutte, was to seldom more than a few days' intermission master the German defences at the south in the struggle for the California plateau, the western buttresses of the Malmaison plateau, narrow foothold at Hurtebise Farm, and the and pass north and west of Malmaison Fort numerous caves quarries and trenches to Malmaison Farm, and to the Montpar which were the natural or artificial features nasse Quarry. On the right was General deof the limestone ridge The greater number Maud'huy, with the 11th Army Corps, com of these were in the German ground between prising the African division under Guyot de Vauxaillon and the Chevregny Spur at the Salins of Verdun, the Alpine Chasseurs, and western end of the ridge Between these part of the 30th Division The African two points was the dismantled forts of Mal- division was asked to take the Bohery Quarry masson—less important as a stronghold than the Fort, and press on to Chavenon The the quarries of Montparnasse, several acres 39th Drusson was to help the Chasseurs to in extent-and of Bohery, to the north and expel the 5th Division of the Prussian Guard south On 24th October, when the assault from the eastern end of the Malmaison at Malmaison was delivered, the Germans plateau Such was Petain's plan, and the were still engaged in the task of linking up. French left nothing to chance in currying it the three points by underground galleries out A preliminary bombardment, terrific The French attack anticipated their come ven in those days of devastating shell fire pletion, and the French heavy guns had lasted seventy hours, it was noticeable for its done a great deal to destroy them Behind use of gas shells, which were very effective were elaborate triple lines running from the in the cramped quarries and wooded ravines height of the Mont des Singes, and along It could not mike the task easy, or sweep the summit of the plateau which stands out of every crevice the resolute German defence, but the whole plan was so well line eastwards in front of another quarry designed that the bittle to which the French (Fruty) and so as also to cover Malmaison gave the name of Malmaison, remains a model of co ordination and skill

Marjoulet's corps curried in succession the Laffaux position Allemant village and the plateau north of it though not without some mishaps several delays and some of that severe fighting which results from the assaulted frontally and, strong as it was Degoutte's troops in the centre laid the

ment towards Chavignon.

till next June, when all the positions, won filading positions.

foundation of the complete success of the General Nivelle's April offensive had emdesign. Dégoutte had also kept to the time- braced yet another bastion, the massif of table. Three hours after his line had been. Moronvilliers on the eastern side of Rheims. set in motion it had captured Malmaison which was destined to play a not dissimilar Farm, and had worked its way, joining hands part in 1918, by enabling General Gouraud with Marjoulet's right, to press onwards to to effect an elastic recoil behind it, when, in the Montparnasse Quarry. On Dégoutte's July, Ludendorff's last throw, the double right, General Maud'huy had taken the advance on either side of Rheims, was made. Bohery Quarry with Guyot Salins' Africans, The Moronvilliers position is one of great and the Zouaves, advancing with their natural strength, a group of seven hills west colonel and their chaplain at their head, of the Suippe, forming a kind of double stormed Fort Malmaison and completed the ridge to which six hills contribute, while the capture of the château. The Chasseurs and seventh, the Mont Sans Nom, stands on the their colleagues of the 20th Division had southern side of a wide hollow as an outlier. hustled the Prussian Guard off the plateau. The heights of the ridge, divided into pairs and then wheeled westwards to join the move- of threes, are, reading west to east, Mont Cornillet, Mont Blond, Mont Haut, and This success, one of the most conspicuous Monts Perthois, Le Casque, Le Téton. It is examples of the limited offensive which needless to dilate on the military engineer-Pétain had preached, gathered in 11,000 ing which the Germans had expended on prisoners, 180 guns, and a very large quantity this position, which they had furthermore of material. It brought to the French a taken the utmost precautions to secure from Pisgah view of the towers of Laon, and though the risk of being turned. On the west a it cannot have been achieved without cost, network of trenches covered the Thuizyit was a heartening exploit at a time when Nauroy road, which passed the western the Italian disaster at Caporetto was to cast boundary, and a wood, the Bois de la Grille, a blight over prospects which had never been was converted into another, and a most bright throughout the summer. Because of effective obstacle. On the east was a similar that disaster, and because the Allies, having scientific system of protection on either side escaped the most threatening consequences of the river Suippe, the slopes leading up of the German submarine campaign, had from which to the ridge were ploughed crossnow to await and expect the culminating wise by trenches. This stronghold had a German blow on the Western Front, it was front of 10 miles: and the French front-line impracticable to exploit General Maistre's trenches were close to the Germans. Taking victory further. Chavignon, Pinon, and the Mont Haut (aco feet) as a hypothetical ob-Pinon Forest, the next obstacles, had to be jective, a storming line would have to attack left alone, and the positions were organized uphill for 2 miles, and the attack would against the attempt that would surely come everywhere be frontal. Moreover, the hills to retake them. That attempt did not arrive were so situated as to afford natural en-

with such devotion, sacrifice, and genius. Such was the problem which General were abandoned almost without an attempt Nivelle had set General Anthoine and the to retain them. They served their purpose, Fourth French Army who faced it. Under nevertheless, although it was not the original General Anthoine, General Hely d'Oissel purpose of securing positions for the advance commanded a left wing of 2 divisions and towards Laon. While the French held them, a regiment, and General J. B. Dumas had they interposed a barrier between the con-rather more than 3 divisions on the right certed advance of the two wings of the Ger- wing. The Germans, who realized in the man army, so that in Ludendorff's spring second week of April from the bombardment offensive of 1918, the first great effort had with which Anthoine deluged them, that an to be made so as to secure its greatest effect assault, however audaciously, was meditated, on one side, and on one side only of them, took no risks but garrisoned their position

artillery to some 1000 guns. Anthoine, though it found compensation in the advance himself an old artilleryman, had a convinced of Hely d'Oissel's right-wing division belief in his own aitillery, and in the six and (General Lobit), which in two hours had got a half days' bombardment, from 10th April 11to all the second line Erfurt trench system to the 17th, reduced the German front line (which prolonged the Leopoldshohe trench to a scrap heap, and had wrecked the on the open slopes), except on the west, easterly half of the second line But on the where their flank was exposed by the failure western side of the position the German of Gallais' division. Nevertheless, the divisecond line lay behind the Bois de la Grille, sion moved onwards to Monts Cornillet and and had not been crushed-fir from it Blond, and a regiment reached the crest of Nor had the works on the western too of the first. The parallel regiment was held hills, or the tunnels sunk in them, been put up in front of Mont Blond by the Flensburg out of action Consequently, any flank trench-system (behind Mont Cornillet and movement of the French towards the west in front of Mont Blond) and General Lobit's was seriously prejudiced before General position was one of some peril. He could Hely d'Ossel's troops left their trenches and this proved, in practice, fatal to the early tunnel of which was vomiting German resuccess of the plan, because success hinged on the westward assault

On the western side, General d'Oissel was to attack La Grille Wood, Mont Cornillet. and Mont Blond General Dumas had the rest of the front, from Mont Haut to the reinforcements

with 40,000 men, and brought up their. The failure here was not redeemed by not, of course, hold Mont Cornillet, the serves, and he had hard work to maintain the unguarded western flank. He brought up his field batteries just in time, and on that day, and for four days more, clung to the slopes of the position assailed

General Lobit's division could have done Suppe, as his share of the assault. It is better, especially on the eastward side, if more than doubtful whether there were General Naulin's division of Africans and enough troops for the end in view, it is Zouaves could have advanced in corres certain that the artillery should have been pondence. But this inner right-wing diviheavier, and its preparations more complete sion, which should have got well up the The preparation failed on the extreme west slopes of Mont Haut and Mont Perthois, got of the attack, where La Grille Wood and the no farther than the continued Erfurt trench-Leopoldshohe trench behind it had been system, and was prevented from further assigned to a division under Le Gallais. The advance by the enfillading fire with which reputation which Le Gallais' division had it wis threstened from the untaken Conwon at Verdun is sufficient guarantee that stringler Redoubt, separating it from General no troops could have done better But Naulin's division. This position remained though, advancing up the open incline, rem- untaken all day on the 17th. It was reduced nants of battalions got through the wood, by heavy howitzers early next morning, and the machine-gun fire from the redoubt the African division then went forward like in the wood, and from the Leopoldshohe a stream which has been undammed. The trench in front, and another enfilleding trench way was further prepared for it by a shelling on the right, cut them down to companies of the heights, and by dusk a company of Some got to the Leopoldshohe trench, but Zouaves stood on the higher crest of Mont they could not hold their ground unsup- Haut They stayed there, and were joined ported, and it was a defeated division which on the companion crest next morning by fell back to the southern half of the wood, other troops It was a culminating effort, and clung there In the subsequent opera- and it proved impossible to improve on it tions Gallais' men held their ground for by ejecting the Germans from the trenches three days, but by that time the Germans which joined Mont Haut to Mont Perwere fully awake to the French intentions thois, so that gradually the French grip was on their wing, and locked the door with unloosed by the unremitting attacks which 2 fresh German divisions, thrown in for

the purpose delivered during the next few had been excessive and the losses inflicted

Naulin's Africans, had made slower progress and these 2 regiments committed to the Trench were bound to go on, and they task of reaching the heights of Le Casque were fortunate in having the right men and and Le Teton had a very trying time. Their leaders to do so. It was especially necessary progress was first enfiladed from a wood at that the stumbling block of the Bois de la the foot of the outlying Mont Sans Nom, Grille and the Leopoldshohe trench should and that kept them off the hills till evening be removed, however determined the Ger-They tried again under better conditions mans might be to retain them. On 26th on the 18th-once more to be enfiladed, April General Vandenbergh took command this time from Mont Perthois But on the of the whole left wing, and he was sup-19th a regiment got up to the Rendsburg plied with fresh divisions General Gallais' trench there to be received with machine hard tried veterins were withdrawn, and guns, and another fought its way to, and a division under General Hennoque was back and forth on, the crest of Le Teton given the task which they had begun This The next day was a repetition of the 19th division advanced to the assault on 30th a furnous struggle for crests that were hardly April when there was not the faintest poswon before a German counter attack from subulity of rushing the defences, or surprising untaken support trenches wrested them the German garnson which manned them back Le Casque could not be held, Le It had accordingly to fight its way through Teton was held partially

battle field General Degoutte's Moroccan at had surmounted the last redoubt in the division did well towards Mont Sans Nom wood, and killed or captured the last Gerthe crest of which it rushed, but the Land man in the Leopoldshohe trench. It had sturm trench system which led to the huge not been alone in its bitter task. On the maze projecting the eastern face of the other side of the road from Thuizv to Moronvilliers slopes, was not subdued till Nauroy a fresh division, under General Trounightfall The Foreign Legion, which con- chaud, struggled day by day till 4th May stituted General Degoutte's right wing, had in the attempt to seize the Flensburg trench, nothing before it but hard going, trench which was the key to Mont Cornillet. It was after trench, system after system, of which not to be done. Mont Cornillet's tunnel the names, the Labyrinth, Beyrouth, Byzance, was a volcano ready always to pour out a the Vain Boyau were significant of gains lava flow of Germans for the counter attack that had to be made yard by yard The The next division on the right, also new,

on some of the best fighting divisions had to

General Eon's troops on the right of be added to the toll of the Nivelle offensive But the position could not be left as it was, crater and concrete pill box, and to con-On the other and less vital half of the tinue to do so for eight days. By that time

turning point towards success did not come and commanded by General Brulard, had till the 19th, when some men of Mordacq's a rather better success in improving General division which had attacked on either side. Naulin's uncompleted work. On 30th April of the Suppe, entered Auberive, and the its violent assault on Mont Haut, Mont Foreign Legion stormed the Labyrinth and Perthois and its tunnel, and on the Fosse Main Boyau systems, and so placed Vaudes-incourt in jeopardy Further advance here Haut, but did succeed in blocking the Mont would have given a promise of turning the Perthois tunnel, and in taking part of the position But at the end of a week's fighting Fosse Froid trench. It was supported by General Anthone's forces were still knock- the work of Eon's division on the right, but ing at the door, and the Germans held it could do no more under the momentum positions on Mont Cornillet, Mont Haut, of its assault, and again the attack was hung Mont Perthoss and Le Casque, from which up, this time for a fortnight Then, on 20th they could still launch damaging counter- May, after another fierce bombardment, attacks It is hardly to be denied that the cost 3 more divisions, or portions of them, were Teton, but with Mont Cornillet as the in artillery and air-crift object of the most concentrated effort 'That Von Gallwitz's position, in face of a effort was successful Mont Cormilet was probable French attack, suffered from the taken, its tunnel captured. Thus, with the defect of being cut in half by the Meuse, greater part of the position taken, and the so that unless he had a large superiority in rest rendered useless to the Germans as a men he would have to transfer troops to base from which to attack, the Moronvilliers defend himself against a heavy attack in the action ceased From first to last, 17th April alternate sectors across bridges subjected to to 20th May, 6000 German prisoners had French artillery fire. His lines extended on been taken, and it is more than doubtful the west of the Meuse in a shallow semi whether in any ordinary circumstances this circle from Avocourt, and its much contested could have been held to recompense the wood, over Hill 304 and the Mort Homme, French for the losses they had endured in thence dipping forward in a small salient taking them. They had, however, inflicted between two hills before reaching back to almost equally heavy losses on the German cover Cumieres, the wood of Cumieres, and counter-attacking forces, and the effort, like the Corbeaux Wood, and the Cote de l'Oie others, had occupied and worn down a behind. The hills on this side offered no number of German divisions

on the Chemin-des-Dames Ridge, and in the Assne Berry-au-Bac plains The second Chemin-des-Dames attack, apart from its character as a scientific action, was an attempt to pin as many German divisions as possible to the Western Front, and in part an insurance against the next year's German offensive Another battle was fought which in many of these aspects resembled it, and is conveniently described as the Fourth was to throw back the Germans to the position occupied by them before the offensive of von Falkenhayn of February, 1916 Von Gallwitz, the German army group com-French commander opposed to him was creeping barrage, and these two were sup- the Meuse heights over the Woevre plun schemes (which had been laid down by spared no pains to improve it artificially General Nivelle) to recover the lost ground Besides the colossal array of p ll-boxes, pits,

thrown into the furnace of Moronvilliers, being equivalent to those with which von a general attack being directed against the Gallwitz was provided for defence in respect whole position from Mont Cornillet to Le of infantry The French had a superiority

wooded shelter, but were bare, and the slopes The Moronvilliers attack, as already has of Hill 304 and the Mort Homme were been noted, is attached chronologically to separated from the new northerly hill dethe first part of the Soisson-Rheims offensive, fences on this side of the Forges brookof which the greater parts were the assaults another defect in the absence of numerical preponderance in the defence The Mort Homme and Hill 304 were similarly separated by the Esnes brook Thus, everywhere on this side the defender was unable to keep his trenches lightly manned, defenders could not be brought up, or transferred rapidly, to threatened points after the first impact of assault, but on the contrary must be posted in first-line trenches and redoubts. The "elastic retirement", that favoured device, Battle of Verdun The object of the French could not be practised west of the Meuse, because its operations would uncover positions east of the Meuse On that side of the mer where Nwelle's last Verdun offensive in 1916 had left the French well posted for mander in this region, was suspicious of the further attack, the German lines went over French intention as early as August The the Côte de Talou in the bend of the Meuse, but the French were in front of Vacher-General Guillaumat, whose coadutor was auville, the Côte de Poivre, Louvemont, and General Fayolle, the originator of the timed. Bezonyaux, thence turning sharply south to ported by General Petain with the men and If, however, the German defensive line was artillery necessary for carrying out the topographically faulty, von Gallwitz had completely Till August these forces had gun emplacements, and redoubts, he had not been available, they may be stated as constructed tunnels on the Moronvilliers

ran the Crown Prince Tunnel. 800 feet long. not counter-attack till late in the day.

protected, and numerous. They were not limited objectives were all secured. These better served than those of the French, were the Talou Ridge and the loop of the who in 1917 had plenty of ammunition, Meuse which cupped it, both taken by and an ample provision of heavy siege-guns. General Matthieu's division. The German The French artillery had been brought to barrage was very poor, and the French losses a bigh pitch of excellence under General were remarkably light, On Matthieu's right, Framiatte, whose 15-inch guns and 10-inch General St. Marmont's division took Hill howitzers pitted the German hills with shell- 344; the 186th Division (General Caron), holes which overlapped, and searched the and the 42nd Division (Deville), stormed tunnels, redoubts, and emplacements with Hill 240, and laid the foundation for the gas-shells. The French air-craft work was forthcoming advance on Fosse and Chaume as good in defence as in spotting, and it is Woods. This and the other projected adasserted that you Gallwitz was left in ignor-vances were prepared with as much foreance till the last moment of the side of the thought as the first (and most successful) Meuse on which the principal attack was to thrust. General Guillaumat methodically be launched. Framiatte's long preliminary consolidated his positions on the eastern side bombardment culminated in a twelve-hours' while holding off counter-attacks, and on gun-fire, which lasted till the thick misty the west he was able to use artillery to endawn of 20th August.

barrage, was in favour of the French method, kept German reinforcements from reaching all carefully rehearsed and exactly timed it by a barrage which could Le directed beforehand, so that within an hour and a from the position won by the French on its half the points assigned to the assaulting neighbour, the Mort Homme. The Gerdivisions west of the Meuse had been mans held on till the 24th, and then were reached. The keenest thrust was first hustled off it and out of the defences on its delivered at the extreme left of Avocourt northern slopes. This took General Linder's Wood, the clearance of which by General division right up to the Forges brook between Linder's division began at five o'clock in the Malancourt and Bethincourt. At daybreak morning, and from which, as on a pivot, the of the 25th, General Carusart's division assault spread eastwards with something of moved up from the Mort Homme to the the aspect of a rolling-up movement. Avo- same level. Lastly, the redoubts at Bethincourt Wood being secured, the division on court were stormed, and on the west of the the right of it was able to go forward towards. Meuse the French were then close to the Hill 304 without fear of being outflanked. original line of 1915. Hill 304 was not directly assaulted; the If these gains were to be kept, however,

model between the two summits of the Mort with no coherent line to retain the hills on Homme, and behind the Bismarck Tunnel which their garrison yet stood. They did

The German guns were well placed, well On the east side of the river the day's large his gains, for he had Hill 304 at his The mist, artificially reinforced by a smoke- mercy. He battered it from a distance, and

division from the Avocourt Wood direction further action on the eastern side of the river flowed past one side of it; another division must be taken to conform to them. The (31st, General Martin) pushed the Prussian momentum of the first surprise had gone; division (von Dietrich) on the other side of the further necessary gains had to be made it back towards the Mort Homme; but not methodically and piecemcal. A well conmany reached it. Nearer to the river the certed attack by Caron's and Deville's French Foreign Legion, transferred from divisions took the whole of Fosse Wood and Moronvilliers, took Cumières on the Cor- Beaumont Wood on the 26th, and successbeaux Wood, and reached the line of the fully threw back von Gallwitz's counter-Forges brook. The day's results on this attack. At this date the French had taken side of the river were that the Germans had 10,000 prisoners; but a break in the weather been pushed back in disorder, and were left reinforced the reasons already suggested for a postponement of further assaults. The in advance of them, and the French had postponement lasted till 8th September, not been able to make any advance into when Guillaumat sent forward General the plains of the Woevre Nevertheless, he Passaga's army corps, with 2 fresh divi had done a great deal. Here, as at Moron sions to capture the Caurteres Wood, be tween Beaumont and Crurieres, which over look those twin hills of Ornes where the German offensive of the culminating heaviest German artillers was ensconced, months of the war, and had in fact done more, and which form a natural barrier to the plain because, when, in September, 1918, the of the Woevre This was by no means an Americans under General Pershing reduced unambitious project, and you Gillwitz threw the St Mihiel silient below Verdun, the in all the men he could collect to resist the flattened line from the Caurieres Sour to assault Passaga was, however, not to be the heights of the Meuse became a new and denied, and after a severe struggle the divi sion under Riberoray burst through Chaume defence Wood, took the Caurieres Spur, and beat off the German counter attacl

in this battle had been one of uninterrupted. Von Kuhne, attempted to justify his appoint than a fortnight to preprie to recover it capture Hill 344, a spur of the Powre Ridge, and with this as lever to retal e Talou Ridge seasoned veterans who were more than cap able of resisting it. It ended in a costly the Germans back to their old positions, but salient, between Chaume Wood and Bezon on the eastern side they were still 2 miles vaux

villiers and the Chemin des Dames the French had effected a reinsurance against lively threat to the continuity of the German

The German share of the Fourth Battle of Verdun did not end with the cessation of Von Gallwitz, whose experience hitherto the French offensive. The new commander failure, could not leave the terrun without ment by improving the situation which he at least one effort, for which he had had more had taken over. He could see the threat of the salient that had been formed at the He launched a counter attack on a large scale. Caurieres Spur, and he was also conscious (10th September) which was designed to that you Gallwitz's attempt to turn the Talou Ridge by the capture of Hill 344 was sound Consequently, he delivered a number of The design was good, the counter attack attacks with the object of reducing the salient excellently organized, but it met in the or capturing the hill. These attacks were divisions of Generals Hennoque and Philipot, seldom delivered on a front of more than 2 miles, and if they produced no results they eertainly kept the French fully occupied German failure, and, another counter attack. The first such attack was made on 11th at the Caurieres Spur having also failed, von September and the last on 10th November, Gallwitz s command at Verdun was abruptly and there were ten in all Between 20th ended by the arm al from army head quarters August and 10th \one on ber the Germans, of General Ludendorff himself Von Gall first under von Gallwitz and then under von witz was succeeded by General von Kuhne, Kuhne had put 24 German divisions into and, as far as the French plans were con the line Von Kuhne did nothing more to cerned, the fourth Battle of Verdun here redeem the previous failure than to take back, ended General Guillaumat had not won at the cost of some hundreds of lives a few back all he desired or intended. On the trenches on the northern slones of Hill 344. western side of the Meuse he had thrown and on the eastern face of the St Caurieres

CHAPTER XIII -

THE RUSSIAN FRONT, 1916-17

sally of the German High Seas Fleet from in Russia. its harbours. But while the situation was the Russian front.

Towards the end of 1916, despite the retreat was at an end, and while the Grand heavy losses in the Battle of the Somme by Duke Nicholas, who had been most shortthe British, and the slow recovery of the sightedly replaced by the Tsar as Com-French from the ordeal of Verdun, there was mander-in-Chief, was reaping the reflected in both armies and both countries a rising glory of General Yudenitch's advance on note of confidence which revealed itself not Erzerum (16th February, 1016), the Russian merely in the utterances of public men, but front was re-arranged under the direction of in the preparations made at the Paris Con- the Tsar's Chief of Staff, General Alexieff. ference of November, 1916, for the offensive The Russian armies of the north were placed of the spring to follow. This confidence was under the command of General Kuropatkin, rudely shaken by the course of the early who emerged from his retirement, and French offensive, the imperfect success of General Evert, who had handled the retreat which could not be concealed, and by the from the line of the Niemen and the Warsaw growing realization that Russia was going out salient so well. Kuropatkin's section was of the war. There was yet another cause for from Riga to Dvinsk, where a new attack by alarm, though this was carefully concealed Hindenburg was a probability, and under from the public, and, as far as possible, from him were the Twelfth, Fifth, and First the Germans, and that was the effectiveness Armies. General Evert had for the task of the new U-boat campaign, which in April, of holding the sector from Vilna to the 1017, threatened to starve Great Britain into Pripet Marshes the Second, Tenth. Fourth. submission within six months unless some and Third Armies. These armies may in new support in the offensive measures against all have amounted to 45 infantry and 8 submarines intervened. That support was cavalry divisions. It is certain that the forthcoming ultimately in the form of United Russian High Command was enlisting very States destroyers, which released for sub- large numbers of recruits, more than could, marine hunting a number of the British in fact, be trained, equipped, and fed. The destroyers which till then had to be kept as last-named consideration was one of the a screen for the Grand Fleet in the event of a causes which contributed to the discontent In the southern group of armies, com-

thus improved at sea, the prospect with manded by General Ivanoff ti April, when which 1916 had closed, that combined pres- he went to Head-quarters, and thereafter sure on the British, French, Russian, and by General Brussiloff, were the Rovno Italian fronts must squeeze the Central army (Eighth) under General Kaledin, the Powers into submission and end the war Eleventh Army, on the borders of Volhynia before the end of 1917, had entirely vanished, and Podolie, under General Sakharoff, the to be replaced by one in which it was only army of Eastern Galicia (Seventh) under too evident that Great Britain, with the help General Scherbatcheff, and General Lechitof France, would have to hold the Western sky's army (Ninth) on the Dnicster. This Front against superior German forces until group was of about the same strength such time as a United States army in training numerically as the northern armies. Facing could bring about a new balance of military the northern group of Russian armies were power. The optimism in December, 1916, forces mainly German and directed by the apprehension in December, 1917, were Hindenburg and Ludendorff. Armies under both attributable to the course of events on von Bülow and von Scholtz threatened the front from Riga to Dvinsk; Von Eichorn In the winter of 1015, when the great (Lake Narotch region), von Fabeck, and von Woyrsch (with an Austrian army corps) the German method General Baluyeff, better off for artillery

masked by independent attacks at a point were to germinate later

were distributed along the rest of the who had command of the assault, was much northern sector Prince Leopold of Baya- better furnished with artillery than was usual ma's troops formed a species of connecting- with Russian armies, but his chief strength link between the northern group of German lay in the courage and persistence of the armies and the Austrian armies which faced troops he commanded. The assault was General Brussiloff The more northerly renewed eight times between 18th March group was in Volhynia, the southern one in and 14th April, and on the right of the ad-Galicia and Bukovina The Volhyman vance, separated from the left by natural district was held by General Pulhallo von obstacles of bog and marsh, a mile of ground Brlog (Third Austro-Hungarian Aimy), the was won The losses were 12,000, the front from Lutsk to Dubno, facing Royno, chief reason for supposing that they were by the Fourth Army (Archduke Josef Fer- warranted was that Evert's plan had pinned dinand) Supporting them were a stiffening the Germans to this sector and had prevented reserve under the German General von Lin- them from undertaking hostile action elsesingen Farther south were General Boehm- where But 12,000 was not the full extent Ermolli's army (Second) and the 2 armies of the Russian losses before the episode of Generals Bothmer and von Pflanzer- closed, or, rather, before the Germans Baltin These Austro-Hungarian armies in allowed it to be closed The positions won the spring of 1916 amounted in the aggregate were not secured, and they were unduly to some twenty Austrian and two German denuded of the supporting artillery so that divisions, and were very much outnumbered when the German counter-attack was set in by the Russians They were, however, well motion on 28th April-with no shortage of entrenched, the system of communications, guns or ammunition-the unfortunate Rusand army supply behind them, had been very sian infantry were once again compelled well organized, and they were incomparably hopelessly to face an attack which no infantry in the world could, or should, have been In this year of 1916 the initiative was taken expected to sustain. The second battle of and retained by Russian strategy. In the Lake Narotch may be summarized by saying spring they forestalled a German offensive that the Germans fought with their guns, on the northern sector by an attack which, and the Russians fought with their lives however costly and unproductive it may have The heaviest losses fell on the regiments been to themselves, fully occupied the Ger- which had done best and suffered most in man attention, and left the Russians com- the previous assaults. In a day the whole paratively unobserved while they matured advantages of General Baluveff's advance their second and clief blow in the southern were wiped out. Something more was also sector against the thinner and less resistant wiped out, and it was the blind confidence Austrian lines The projected first thrust of the Russian infantryman in his general of General Evert against von Eichorn was. This episode was one of the many seeds that

Tarnopol sector, where General Scher- paign of 1016 did not, however, take place batcheff fought fiercely for a crossing of the on this front, but was directed by General Dniester at Oscieszko (February and March) Brussiloff south of the Pripet It was an But Evert's offensive was on a much larger attack which differed entirely from the scale It was directed against the army of German in method, and was necessarily von Eichorn, and the first assault, made dependent not on overwhelming artillery, with a army corps, attacked between Lake though it was fairly well supplied with guns, Narotch and Lake Vishnevsky, where the but on the numbers, and the, as yet, unroad leads to Vilna The Germans were shaken resolution of the Russian soldier well posted on sloping ground naturally A Russian general could not command the fenced in by bog, and improved according to concentration of artillery which had enabled

von Eichorn had blown back the Russians who held the most northerly of the comfrom the ground they had won at Lake mands in the southern group, pushed forward Narotch. He could depend on, at the most, in three directions: on the right their columns a substantial artillery preparation before moved parallel to the railway which runs sending his troops over an extended front. from Rovno to Kovel and the River Styr; When the front, as in Brussiloff's problem, the central group of corps took the road to was between 200 and 300 miles, his chief Vladimir Volhynsk; the left marched parallel weapon must be not guns, but men. The to the Rovno-Dubno-Brody railway. The problem was to be solved by an attack along three advances were shaped on the lines of a front so wide that the enemy would find a broad arrow. (It will be observed that in himself unable to swing reinforcements from this advance Sakharoff's right co-operated one threatened point to another, and so with Kaledin's left. On the other hand, might fail at some sector to withstand the Sakharoff's left engaged the Austrian army attack. Such tactics did not usually suc- next lower down, namely that of Boehmceed against German armies, or German Ermolli). commanders, both because these were usually The 2 armies which thus Kaledin and never fully to be depended on.

Front, but had cut lanes in the wire by which Von Linsingen, with his reserves, and such

von Mackensen in 1915 to level the defences infantry might force a way into enemy posiof Radko Dmitrieff, or even those by which tions. Generals Kaledin and Sakharoff,

too alert, and because their mobility, whether Sakharoff engaged were those of General conferred by means of transport, or by Puhallo von Brlog and the Archduke Josef marching ability and organization, was too Ferdinand. The right-hand columns north good. It was different with the Austrians, of Kolki, where the marshes were numerous, whose staff work was not so good, though made comparatively little headway against the Austro-Hungarian armies were far from General Puhallo; but in the centre, against deserving the contumely heaped on them the Archduke, the Russian columns swept by German generals, from Ludendorff through the defences like paper, and, with downwards. LudendorfPs opinion of them their cavalry rounding up the prisoners, was expressed by saying that in the Austrian marched swiftly forward over rolling country Alliance Germany was bound to a corpse, to the Styr, behind which the harried Austro-But the failure of Austro-Hungarian armies Hungarian troops were bundled. The leadwas due in the greatest degree not to want ing Russian columns occupied Lutsk on of unity of purpose in the leadership, but to 7th June, forced a passage over the Styr on want of unity in the rank and file, who were 8th June, and by the 16th were 12 miles from of heterogeneous nationality, diverse and Vladimir Volhynsk. The right wing, though often opposed aims, and whose snoral, both making much slower progress, had by the on this front and on the Italian front, was 13th captured Kolki, and as the wedge broadened, went on to take Svidniki on the Stokhod Brussiloff's plan spread a very heavy after a very fierce engagement. On the south pressure over a number of sectors simul- of the great semicircular salient thus created. taneously, and it owed its success to the and known thereafter as the Lutsk salient, complete co-ordination of all the armies Sakharoff's right wing captured Dubno on applying it: to the co-operation of all arms; the 8th, and was on the 16th at Radzilvo. and, by no means least, to the, as yet, un- outside the gates of Brody, 7 miles distant, blemished resolution of the Russian in- In twelve days' time this most damaging fantryman. On 4th June the Russian armies, attack had captured 70,000 prisoners, 83 from the Pripet to the Bukovina, from guns, and a great amount of war material General Kaledin to General Lechitsky, gathered from an area which at its preatest began to move forward simultaneously after depth was nearly 50 miles from the 80-mile an artillery preparation which had not front whence it had started. Kaledin was smashed up the Austrian trenches after the now 25 miles from Kovel; and the situation manner of the bombardments on the Western here was one which demanded instant action.

on a line from Kozlov, just below the railway at Okna, near the most easterly bridge-head from Tarnopol to Lemberg, to the River of Biskupie Pflanzer-Biltin strove in vain Dniester He had Sakharoff's left wing to to stop the gap, but fuled, and after five aid him Sakharoff faced Boehm-Limolli, days' fighting the whole of his frontal position and his function was to hold the ground here on the hills was gone, and Lechitsky's Cosconformably with Scherbatcheff's attack on sacks, crossing the Dniester at the more the German General von Bothmer Von westerly bridge-head of Zalesczyki, were Bothmer's troops were stiffened with Ger- cutting across the plain between the Dniester mans, but were chiefly Galician Poles, who and the Pruth to get astride the railway which fought very well against the Russians ran from the Bukovina and Czernowitz to Scherbatcheff's task proved by no means Kolomen, and so to intercept Pflanzer-Baltin's easy His preliminary bombardment and westward retreat. The cavalry occupied the onrush of his infantry buist through the Sniatyn on the railway by the 13th Czerfirst lines of Bothmer's defences, but the nowitz, thus isolated, was hurriedly aban-German general's left held fast to the railway doned (17th) by whatever Germans and to Tarnopol, and while he pivoted there his Austrians, civilian or military, still occupied line could not be thrown back, but only it But that was a small loss compared with swung westwards down he pressed back towards the Strypa, was forced to retrent across the Pruth to the running north and south, which the Russians Carpathians The Pruth was crossed by the crossed towards the centre, and lower down Russians on the 16th, and on the 23rd they still Scherbatcheff seized Bucacz (8th June) had reached Kimpolung, in the Bukovina, and, crossing the Strypa at several points, far to the south of Czernowitz, and well on pushed well to the westwards In these and the way both to Kirlibiba and to Dorna subsequent operations Scherbatcheff cap- Watra, where a hand could be held to the tured 17,000 prisoners and 30 guns, but Roumanians, if and when, they entered the while Bothmer was strongly posted, with the war Lechitsky had captured 20,000 of Lemberg-Tamopol line to supply him, the Pflanzer-Baltin's army, and scattered the Russians were unable either to roll him up remainder To these attacks of Brussiloff's or advance their own left too far for fear of a southern front must be added one made by dangerous counter-stroke

In the most southerly section General German Army on 13th June Lechitsky struck very hard frontally at the Zalescycki and Biskupie, which were nearest and the Austro Hungarian aimies of the

reinforcements as Hindenburg could spare east, and nearer Pflanzer-Baltin's hill barrier, from the northern front, took over what was had resisted attempts at capture. The hill left of the Archduke's army, and Ludendorst barrier did not quite touch the river to the came down to clear up the situation. Before north of it, and Lechitsky directed the most scanning the success of the German com- furious efforts of his frontal attack at the manders in stemming so threatening an little gap between It succeeded, and by advance, the successes of the Russians on the evening of 4th June, his infantry was other sectors of their front may be considered pressing through the gap, while at the same General Scherbatcheff's front of action was time crossing the Dniester to the north of it Nevertheless, lower the wreck of Pflanzer-Baltin's army, which the Fourth Russian Army on the Ninth

Brussiloff's great attack had succeeded strongest point of General von Pflanzer-Bal- triumphantly on both wings, though it had tin's defences on the range of hills between made less headway at the centre He had, the Dniester and the Pruth, while at the same therefore, two lines for subsequent advance, time making an equally vigorous turning and two directions in which he threatened movement by way of the bridge-heads across to exploit his advantage. The first, and the Dniester, which was the flank protection most northerly, was towards Kovel, and that, of Pflanzer-Baltin's position Of these bridge- because it would place him in a position to heads Oscieszko had been won in the Rus- sever the best lateral line of communications sian winter campaigning, but the other two, between the German armies of the north south, was the one on which the Germans had on its eastern bank from its source to would certainly most resist him. The most where it falls into the marshes.

Volhynsk on the way to Lemberg. northern of the salients for their counter- disastrous. General Sakharoff, in command attack, which Ludendorff instructed von of the Russian forces on this side of the Linsingen to undertake. The salient which salient, repulsed the attack, and, following Kaledin had created about Lutsk was an up his advantage, drove von Linsingen's irregular semicircle. Linsingen did not reinforcements of Boehm-Ermolli back over strike at the apex of the arc, but where this the Galician frontier towards Brody, taking arc, on the north, approached its chord. The 13,000 prisoners. The pressure towards point then selected was on the River Stokhod, Brody began to make General Bothmer's where a most vigorous German counter- position on the right bank of the Strypa attack assailed his bridge-head at Svidniki, precarious; but it was impossible for the The Russians had to fall back under the Germans to allow him to retreat without weight of the blow, but they fought very peril to their other atmies, and he was given hard during the last week of June, and were fresh troops, and his resistance stiffened not pushed back in any way decisively enough accordingly. to imperil Kaledin's communications with the westerly portions of his salient. In maintaining a continuous pressure everyorder to hold it better General Brussiloff now where, but of seeking always some new brought up a new army under General Lesch, weakened point where it would prove most whose object was to outflank Linsingen's effective, instead of hammering at the points outflanking manœuvre in its turn by crossing where reinforcements could be massed the Stokhod farther to the north. Lesch against them, Lechitsky now took up the began his attack on 4th July, about the same threads of action, and his effort was directed day that General Rogoza, in a more northerly to the domination of that plain of the sector, renewed his attack on General Dniester, with its railways converging about Woyasch in order still more fully to occupy Kolomea, Stanislau, and Halicz, which conthe German attention.1 The stroke was ditioned either a successful attack on the remarkably successful. He captured the Carpathians, or an advance towards a juncrailway station of Mameutchi on the line tion with Roumania, Lechitsky's cavalry that runs westwards from Czartorysk to had reached the Sereth on 18th June, and Kovel, and his advance spreading north- Kimpolung towards the end of the month. wards, he took all the German positions on but these feelers were subsidiary to the main the lower Stokhod as far as the Pripet advance, which pushed towards Kolomea Marshes. His captures numbered 12,000. (occupied 30th June), the railway to the Kaledin, with this flanking attack prospering Jablonitza Pasa (carried 4th July), and to the north of him, returned to the attack Delatyn (captured 8th July). By this time, on the Upper Stokhod, recaptured the bridge- however, the Germans had removed General head of Svidniki, and thus, in conjunction Pflanzer-Baltin from the command of the with Lesch, held the whole line of the Stok- remnants of his army, replacing him by

Rogons captured (4th July) 3100 men; but this advance was not pressed after 9th July.

to the further destruction of the Austro- inflicted by his counter-attack was sufficient Hungarian armies, he might aim successively to prevent any advance on the vital point of at the railway junctions of Kolomea, Stanis- Kovel; and in that respect it was decisive. lau and Halicz. These would give to him But von Linsingen could not convert his a prowing share of the Dniester plain as he defensive check into anything more satissuccessively attained them. In the middle factory. In the middle of July he shifted part of the line he might aim at Vladimir his attack from the northern convexity of the semicircle to the southern, where it was The Germans rightly chose the most nearest to Brody; but the attempt was

> Obediently to the Russian strategic idea of General Köevess, with General Höman as

army, which had stood almost immovably rains appravated the difficulties of supply on the same railway and at the same time and transport General Scherbatcheff, who had been held evacuated his positions on the Upper Strypa This was three days before Lechitsky's joining hands there with a cavalry column of Scherbatcheff's army under General pressed forward enderyouring to keep in elose touch with von Bothmer, and a fieree rear-guard action was fought between you banks of the parallel Gnila Lipa.

lized on the River Stokhod line There was in 1917 was born

General Sakharoff had meanwhile eon- a fierce action at Syidniki on 27th July. tinued to evert an unremitting pressure on where Kaledin entured 9000 prisoners with General Boehm-Ermolli's forces, and, after 46 guns, but it was not praeticable to follow several weeks of continuous fighting, forced it up. The limits of the advance, in face of the Austrian commander back through the hardening resistance of the Germans. Brody (28th July) on to the upper Sereth, had been reached, and great as had been which Sakharoff renched on 4th August Brussiloff's successes, lic hid, as in every Zalotse was occupied on the 6th, and by the victorious advance, suffered heavy losses in middle of August the Eleventh Russian Army has best fighting divisions. Even a Russian had gained the railway running from Tarno- general, at that period of the war, lind not an pol to Lemberg These operations im- illimitable number of shock troops, and a halt perilled the northern flank of Bothmer's had to be called as soon as the early autumn

But during these summer months the up by the flooded Driester, began to imperil Russians had performed an immense service Bothmer's southern wing On 7th August to the Alhed cause, and though the diffihe captured Thimacz with 7400 prisoners, culties of advance against Austro-Hungarian among them several German battalions, and armies, neither well generalled nor wholewithout a pause captured the bridge-head of heartedly devoted to the cause they were Nizmow (7th August), and Stanishu (10th fighting for, were much less than those which August) The occupation of this second Sir Doughs Haig, or General Joffre, ennodal point, coupled with Sakharoff's sue-countered in the enderyour to break through cesses towards Brody, foreshadowed the the defences of the best equipped and most "cupping" of von Bothmer's resisting solidly entrenched forces of all the belligerforces, a danger to which the German ents, yet the scale of the fighting was very general was fully alive He had, however, much larger, and the scale of the losses susgood railway communications behind him tained in conducting it also. The Russian running westwards, and he began to retreat advance in 1016, alike in its inception, its in good order on 11th August, when he resolution, and its generalship, will bear comparison with that which, when all the belligerents were much more exhausted, was cavalry entered Mariampol (15th August), made by the British, French, and American armies under the direction of General Foch in 1018 By the middle of September. Bezobrazoff General Bezobrazoff had Generals Kaledin, Lesch, Sakharoff, Seherbatcheff, Bezobrazoff, and Lechitsky had captured over 370,000 Austro-Hungarian prisoners, 450 guns, and an amount of supplies Bothmer's Poles and the Russians at the as great as fell into Ludendorff's hands in erossings of the Zlota Lipa However, his break through at St Quentin in 1918, or whatever losses von Bothmer suffered there, after the Caporetto disaster on the Italian he had ample time in which to prepare and front in 1917. Such victory as had been occupy strong lines of defence on the steep won against the Central Powers in 1016 was overwhelmingly theirs when compared with While von Bothmer, under the converg- other successes, and it was because they had ing pressure of 3 Russian armies, retreated all but put the Austro-Hungarian armies sullenly westwards-his right wing thrown out of action, and had laid them open to backwards to hold Halicz, the last railway a new, and, as it was hoped and believed, knot of south-eastern Galicia-the advance a decisive attack in the following spring, that of Kaledin and Lesch had remained immobi- the belief in a speedy ending to the war early

man-power had been suffered during the Socialism should have been distributed so great offensive of 1016 and something more thoroughly, but the phenomenon was not than the wearing down of the steel facing astonishing among some seven or eight of shock battalions There had been a great million men massed in reserve depots. The loss of officers and neither the new officers focus of disaffection was Petrograd, and there nor the men hastily truned in reserve camps it exhibited itself most palpably when the were the equivalent of the old. In Great, time came, but it had a hundred points of Britain the old regular army had been lost distribution, some of them outside Russia, in the battles of 1914 and 1915 but its spirit in Switzerland, in New York, in Finland in and traditions, as Sir Douglas Hair testified Germany and even in London Probably in the Victory Dispatch penned in 1918, the least disaffected localities were the army infused the new armies, so that in tenacity fronts but these were not immune, and and hard-won skill there was not a great deal though the great bulk of the public of France to choose between them. But in Russia war, and Great Britain rested satisfied in the wearmess received a thousand encourage belief that Russia, stimulated by the 1916 ments, and the fire of enthusiasm with victories and conscious of her great reserves which the Russian Empire, so far as it was of man power and the stream of ammunition articulate, had received the Tsar's declara and utiliers flowing in from the White Sea tion of war, sank and was quenched in the and from Vladroostok, was gathering herself revelation of the incompetence and corrup tion of those who governed the country in spring of 1917, yet there were some who, war time

at the beginnings of industrialism, had not 17 there was along the Russian front very the necessary machinery for conducting a little of that enterprising raiding activity long war. Her railways were not equal to which had been present in former years as influenza spreads in crowds
It has been of war, and that it was waiting such a moment sometimes thought to be extraordinary that sometimes thought to be extraordinary that among a population, nine out of ten of whom feandered off the Others on 5th June 1916

Something more than attrition of Russia's cannot read the theories of Anarchistic together for the greatest effort of all in the better informed, or more suspecious, noted Russia, an agricultural country which was with anxiety that during the winter of 1916-

the strain of transport, her factories could The dangers of the political situation were not turn out the requisite material and in more obvious. The British Ambassador the new tasks which both were called on to in Petrograd, Sir George Buchanan, had undertake they proved insufficient, and were been obliged to protest more than once overtaken by a progressive paralysis. There against the pro German attitude of certain must have been many thousands of patriotic sections of the Russian aristocracy, in the Russians who strove in an agony of effort Duma, M Miliukoff had courageously risen to keep things going, or to put things right to denounce the attitude of M Sturmer, the but their endeavours were inconspicuous Minister of the Interior, and the dispatch by the side of the conduct of those who were in turn of Lord Kitchener, on the tragic incompetent, or corrupt The word treachery voyage of the Hampshire 1 and of Lord Milner began to be whispered, and grew louder indicated that all was not well in the Russian The new armies contained many of the situation. The root of the evil was popularly industrialized half-educated, or better edu- supposed to be the pro German influences cated classes and these formed a fertile at Court, coupled with the autocratic resoluground when the army was ill led or ill fed, tion of the Tsar and Tsaritsa not to yield to in which to sow the seeds of discontent, popular pressure for a more democratic form mutiny, revolution Revolution in the in- of government. But it went deeper than dustrialized classes had been simmering since that Unreported in the debates were the 1905, the aggregation of hundreds of thou- utterances of Socialists like Kerensky, which sands of men in camps and in armies gave showed that the spirit of revolution had not ample opportunity for its doctrines to spread, been laid either in 1905 or by the fierce spell

on the Russian front during this winter and spring, and the reports, which could not be suppressed, of fraternization of Russian and German soldiers

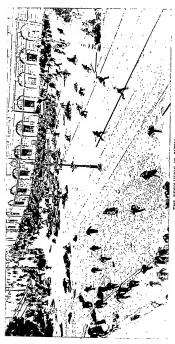
The more immediate concern of the present narrative is to examine the help which at Sumaren, a height commanding the Jabthe Russian forces lent to Roumania after lonitza gate, on 3rd December, and between the entry of that country into the war Dorna Watra and the Borgo Pass, on 8th Roumania came in before she was ready, December In each of these actions the her stocks of ammunition and her guns were. Russians made some ground and took prisinsufficient, her army was ill officered, the oners, but they could neither improve on military strategy adopted was wrong, and the positions won nor hold them the enemy she had to meet was incomparnot limited to joining hands with the Rou the Hungarian plains with a Russian advance

The Jablonitza Pass, through which a railway runs to Marmaros Sziget in Hungary. was the avenue by which such an advance would have been most effective and threatenfarther south-east, the Kırlıbaba (reached by of the Sereth flowing through Focsani Russian patrols, but quickly abandoned, in

as had now arrived to declare itself. The of function between the two armies. These story of these tendencies belongs more passes were all strongly held by Austroproperly to a political narrative than to one Hungarian troops, and the Jablonitza especidealing, as in this chapter, with the course ally was well and scientifically protected by of the war, but a reference to them is neces- artillery General Koevess, in charge of sary to make comprehensible the mactivity the defending forces, was able to hold all three passes, and the Russians, though they expended the men, had not the guns to take them There were many fierce encounters. of which the most successful and bloodiest were those at Kırlıbaba, on 28th November,

Failing this, to the Russians fell the ably her superior at every point. These are scarcely less arduous task of protecting the sufficient reasons for the series of disasters beaten Roumanians as they fell back to the which overtook her, and there is no need to line of the Sereth under the pressure of you resort for explanation to the supposed Rus- Falkenhayn's victorious advance through the sian failure to make the necessary function. Transvivanian passes. This line extended with the Roumanian forces through the Buko- 45 miles in a north-westerly direction from vina, or to place the numbers of soldiers Galatz, where the Sereth falls into the agreed upon at Roumanian disposal Lech- Danube, to the entrenched camp of Focsani itsky's advance guards had reached Kimpo- The River Screth, which rises in Moldavia, lung in the summer, and in the same drive flows north to south more or less parallel the passes of Kirlibaba and Jablonitza were to the Pruth, and passes east of Focsani approached Subsequently the Bukovina On 2nd December Russian Head-quarters, was effectively occupied, and the necessary fully alive to the danger in which their steps taken to effect a junction with the Roumanian allies stood, sent a force from Roumanians, when the occasion for it arose
Vuskineff to hold up Falkenhayn's endeavour But the function of the Russian forces was to turn the Screth line They took up a position at Rimnic Sarat, and for five days manians It was desirable that they should held up the German advance. In this hold the hinge in the eastern Carpathians, struggle they lost 7600 prisoners, but kept whence the Austro Hungarian armies could their guns-which were not likely to have sally to attack the Roumanian flank, and the been numerous-and they courageously most effective form of aid would, of course, counter-attacked after the positions had been have been to occupy the passes and threaten lost and the town abandoned They fell back steadily on Focsani, fighting rear-guard actions, but they could not hold this valuable point under the threat of a turning movement by the German Ninth Army's northern wing, which found and forced a way by the ing Failing that there were two passes, upper reaches of the River Putna, a tributary

In the south, on the other side of the 1915) and the Borgo Pass, through which a Danube, were other Russian forces, also road lends to Doma Watra, the agreed point belated, which were endeavouring to help



Leninists firing on the crowd in Petrograd.—Reproduced from an instantaneous abstraction



the Roumanians to hold back Mackensen's advance through the Dobrudja; though when the term "belated" is used, it must be held only to imply that the Russians, who were under Sakharoff, arrived too late to remedy a state of affairs which had never been contemplated as possible. The Roumanian ability had been over-estimated, the force of the German leadership and organization and driving power under-estimated; and the hopeless state of the railways, which could not be driven to accommodate an urgent and unexpected necessity such as here arose, were responsible for the delay and the consequent disaster. It must suffice to say at this point 1 that General Sakharoff, tardily put in charge of the Dobrudia reinforcements, did hold back von Mackensen for some time from the

lower reaches of the Sereth. Along the line of the river runs a railway coming up through Roumania, through Rimnic Sarat and Focsani. Thirty miles north of Foesani another railway strikes north-eastwards from the main line to the Gyimes Pass of the eastern Carpathians, thence running into Hungary. By the side of this railway the river Trotus descends from the pass, and has various small tributaries, the Tzul, the Slanic, the Oitoz, rising in the Oitoz Pass, and flowing into the Trotus, with another stream, the Casin, on which stands Monestirka. Twenty miles south is Pralea on the Suritza. The country thus intersected is rough and bare of roads. In the first week of January, 1917, General Gerok, who, with Generals Deliminsingen and Morgen, formed von Falkenhavn's left wing, began to press down these valleys, and General Goldbach began to descend the more southerly Slanie. The critical period was in the first fortnight of January, 1017. during which Russians and Roumanians, at their best in this kind of infantry fighting, tenaciously defended their positions. In the last fortnight, though they were pressed back to Fundeni and to the general line of the Sereth, they deprived the Austro-German advance of its momentum. In Feb- which Locker-Lempson's British armouredruary General Gourko, sent to the Bukovina car squadron took part. The general results to reorganize the defences, began an inter- up to the end of March were that, though



mittent but protracted counter-offensive, in the Germans could not be forced back, they were unable to pierce the Sereth line.

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other reference will be found in the sub or dealing with the Balkon earnpaigns. You, VI.

They could afford to wait, for a more party in Germany to make one more great Germany on this front, for they had but to Land of Promise wait for the consummation of the revolution Britain and France, and staunch for the to an attack on the enemy's lines many

though their activities enabled the military Warsaw front it was a little better, General

powerful ally than any was coming to their effort to turn the tide of war in Germany's aid "Time", said Mr Lloyd George, in favour, but that of false evangelists who per a much-quoted speech, " is the deadliest of suaded the Russian people that they would the neutrals" Time was on the side of lead them out of the miseries of war into the

But an army, like a nation, takes a great in Russia in order to be relieved of the pres- deal of destroying, and though the Russian sure of the most numerically powerful of army was inoculated with the same virus of their enemies, Russia herself. That Ger- peace-honourable or dishonourable-that many was well acquainted with the possi- had spread through Petrograd and Moscow, bility was made evident by the cessation of it had not wholly forgotten the tradition of activity along the 800-miles front during the obedience. This was sapped by an ordinwinter, and by the fraternization between ance that was symbolic and by a measure the opposing lines, which was encouraged which was practically disruptive. The or-A virtual armistice existed in some sectors dinance was the notorious "Prikaz No 1", during the period when the revolution was which emoined soldiers not to salute their gathering force, and became of continually officers, the practical measure was the conwidening extent as the prospects of a stitution of Soldiers' Committees analogous Socialist Government of an anarchistic type to the Soldiers and Workmen's Committees became brighter. The Tsar abdicated in which were at this time the virtual governors March, efforts were made to establish a of Russia These Soldiers' Committees dis Constitutional Government under the leader- cussed orders, tactics, and strategy, and ship of a Provisional Committee, of whom produced such a state of indiscipline on the the chief figures were Prince Lvoff and M larger part of the front that no general would, Milnikoff, both friends of the Allies, Great or could, have thought of leading his troops

vigorous prosecution of the war against Ger- Shortly after the Tsar's abdication, General Alexieff had been confirmed in his office as To unseeing eyes it appeared possible that Commander in-Chief In the mid-period of Russia had revolted to rid herself of pro- the revolution, after M Kerensky, as a kind German influences, and that, with these of balancing power between the extreme shackles gone, with her artillery renewed, Socialists and the Constitutionalists, had her depots filled, this newly born giant would become Prime Minister, General Alexieff aid Europe to overthrow the last and most resigned. Any general at this time was powerful of the autocracies There were always afraid to risk an offensive, the risk many men in Russia who, seeing the eyes arising now not from any shortage of guns of the Western world thus turned in expecta- and shells, or even transport-in this respect tion towards them, strove to fulfil their the army front was better equipped than at destiny They were frustrated, not by the any previous time-but from a want of intrigues of Germany, nor yet wholly by the confidence in the soldiers. It is certain, howhandful of persistent and determined Red ever, that no great offensive could have revolutionaries-among whom Lenin was depended on the railways, which were worse the strongest, the shrewdest and the ablest now than ever Their rolling-stock had not -but by the mertia and incomprehension been renewed, and all the efforts of American of that immensely preponderant population engineers to get the lines in order were unof Russia which does not understand ideals able to release them from the dry rot spreador politics, but wants food and land and peace ing through them. On the northern front, in which to enjoy them. The part which nearest Petrograd, where the railway lines, Lenin and his associates played in the though bad, were better than elsewhere, the struggle was not that of German agents, spirit of the troops was worst of all On the

might have been true

many of them, into a vociferous, if brief, tunity would have seemed heaven sent

allegimee to duty tween Kerensky and the Bolsheyske under plong an 11 mile front from a point north-Lenin and his chief of staff Trotsky, and west of Tarnopol and to get astride the the struggle may be compared to a race railway which leads from Tarnopol through against time If Kerensky's appeal had Zlocrow to Lemberg This line joins produced a fairly lasting responsiveness in the more northern railway from Brody the army, then an offensive of a hmited kind to Lemberg The Seventh Army, under might be launched, and if it were successful General Belkovitch, facing Brzezany, was as it ought to be, and would have been to cross the River Zlota Lipa, where you in the previous year, it might bind the Bothmer had made his stand, and was then victorious troops to a new purpose, and keep to wheel north westwards in the same directhem in motion It would also, these things tion as General Erdelli, and the Eleventh having been secured, contribute to maintain. Army, with which it was to seek touch. If Kerensky and his Government in the saddle these movements succeeded, the advance was The Lenin party, on the other hand, hoped to be continued towards Bobrka, through to prevent any such movement, and prepared which the railway from Halicz to Lembers a rising in Petrograd on the eve of it. The passed. The whole of this task was a serious Germans, it may perhaps be assumed, did one, for the country through which it had not believe that any considerable offensive to be made was wooded, and intersected by could be launehed General Brussiloff was awkward ravines and a difficult river Scher himself doubtful, but he concurred in the batcheff's forces had been unable to traverse plans for it

Gourl o who commanded there, was re —not a great strategist though a good noved by the Government on suspicion of soldier. But the best strategist would have being concerned in intrigues to restore the been hampered by conditions which pre autoersey General Gourlo denied the sembed a limited offensive, and one which accusation and subsequently found his way would not put too great a strun either on the to England but it was an accusation which ability or the endurance of the soldiers taking had it been levelled at many other generals part in it. The factors in Gutor's favour were that the Austro Hungarian forces south There was in short, a profound distrust of the Pripet were not much better than his between the army's best generals and the own in point of loyalty to their cause, and Government and a searcely less pronounced that the German Head quarters Staff was want of confidence between commanders very sceptical about the possibility of any and commanded in the army itself. The such attack. General Gutor had, therefore, front least infected was that between the the advantage of springing a surprise, and, Pripet and the Carputhians which had been on the front which he proposed to assailcomen ed by Brussiloff's victories of the from Brody to the ecetor south of the Disespreceding year, and the Allied ambassadors ter where Lechitsky had paused in the prein Petrograd, though they could not ignore ceding nutumn-he had a considerable the signs that it would be much harder for numerical superiority 54 Russian divisions any Russian leader to talle Russian soldiers to 30 mixed Austro Hungarian, with Turks into a successful battle than to lend the and some German troops. The Russian divi-Russian people to a German peace urged sions were all well supplied their aeroplane kerensky and the so called Coalition Go service was better than it had been, they vernment to order an offensive in this region had abundance of material and munitions, Kerensky did his best, he visited the army and the front was not ill supplied with rail fronts, and, with the aid of a passionate ways and roads. It was also good fighting eloquence, grit mized the troops, or a great weather. In other circumstances the oppor-

General Gutos directed 3 armies The Behind the front a struggle went on be Eleventh, under General Erdelli, was to act at the year before

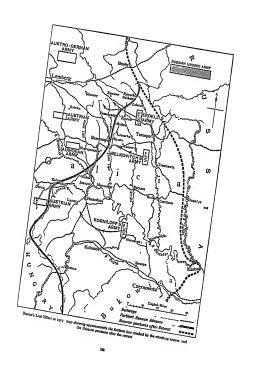
turning flank movement. He was to com- many of them compatriots, and not unplete the conquest of the Halicz region, willing to be taken. Other fighting of a which had been left unfinished in 1916, and heavy kind about Koniuchy added to the to obtain control of the rulway leading up tale of successes, prisoners, and guns, till to Lemberg If his movement, a wide turn by 3rd July the captures were well over ing one, succeeded, and if that of Belkovitch, 6000 But as the Seventh Army paused. a turning movement of less radius, succeeded and the German anxiety on the Brzezany also, the Austro-Hungarian and German front became less acute, the Eleventh Army divisions holding the Brzezany front would found a period put to its successes also, and stand in danger of being rolled up, while by 6th July the advance here ceased in the pinned down by Lidelli and the Eleventh face of energetic counter-attack Army

before the action opened, corps and company the shaking fortunes of the last Russian commanders alike spent the previous night offensive. His advance did not begin till in desperate and prayerful anxiety lest their 6th July, by which time the fronts opposite troops should fail them. One part of the the Eleventh and Seventh Armies should, task-that allotted to the Seventh Army in according to plan, have been engaging all the advance to Brzezany and the Zlota Lipa the attention that the enemy could spare for -was such as might have tried the best of them On the first day he began to feel his Russian troops in other years The position way forward from Stanishu, on a broad front, they were asked to take was protected by the to Dolina, and on 8th July, when he joined deep cleft of the river, and high wooded hills battle with von Bothmer's division, the on the east and to the south The men ad- Lighth Army's shock troops went through vanced bravely enough on 1st July, and in the enemy resistance as if it had been paper their first assault captured over 2000 pri- Jezupol was taken and Korniloff's cavalrysoners But between the Zlota Lipa and the his best arm-pushing forward with daring. little River Tseniow was a death-trap, where circled round to the River Lukwa and to a very great numbers of German and Austrian point 8 miles behind the enemy's first-line troops were killed by the advance, but where defences. He took over 7000 prisoners the Russians were themselves caught in a Von Bothmer, realizing the gravity of the murderous cross-fire, and the history of many position, nevertheless held the front toprevious Russian assaults was repeated But gether, and presently counter-attacked with there now arose an incident unprecedented the Austrian Third Army, but Korniloff bore in the tragedies of the Eastern Front A down his resistance, and his infantry reached Russian division, which might have turned the Lukwa In two days fighting he had the scale, refused to advance, and the whole broken through on a 13-mile front, and the movement was arrested. The ground won Russian infantry, pouring through the breach was temporarily retained, but with a growing in the wake of the shock division of General uncertainty In the days that followed, while Cheremisoff's corps, spread into the southern the Germans were steadily reinforcing the Dniester plains. In three days Halicz, front, Russian battalions were refusing to which had been unapproachable during stay in the front line

the Little Strypa The Czecho Slovak crumbling from within

the Eighth Army, was entrusted with the brigade alone captured over 2000 prisoners.

In the south, General Korniloff's career The venture was desperate It is said that offered a temporary promise of retrieving many months, was in Russian hands, and This situation reacted on the position of Korniloff's thrust had, in the theoretical the troops farther north, where General sense, succeeded triumphantly. But it was Erdelli's Eleventh Army had at first done only in theory. He had, as he afterwards extremely well at little cost Finnish troops confessed, used up the best of his shock with a Czecho-Slovak brigade had been the troops, and even if it had been possible to Greathead shield of the advance, and had send others-which it was not-they could forced the Austro Hungarians back towards not have altered a situation which was



he had reached Kalusz, but he could not panie which he was not in charge

On 20th July, following a strong German, the Russian troops, having manifested discounter attack between Pienril 1 and Bitkow, obedience to the comminders, were con attained in the advance, "the 607th Mlynoff render to the enemy Regiment left the trenches voluntarily", as Tarnopol, the scene of orgies which would the Russian communiqué plainly put it. In have disgriced Turl's or Bulgarians, the still plainer words they ran away, leaving the scene also of some feets of despuring heroism, other regiments, who were standing up to was occupied by the Austrians on 22nd July. the enemy, to bear the brunt alone These its stores had been burnt, as were those at regiments were forced back the breach was Koziowi. The Austrian divisions did not widened the enemy pressed through it advance first and it is furly clear that had The gate had been opened by the Russians there been anyone to rilly, or any divisions but the effect was no other than that of a to be rallied a determined counter attack break through by the enemy The German could have been averted the completion of the Austrian attacl, spreading to Zborow, at the disaster Two Austro Hungarian divisions unction of the two main roads to Zalocze herded 12 Russian divisions in front of and Tarnopol, found a Russian division ready them. But what is clearer than speculations to throw down its arms and desert, and in as to what might have been done, is that a day the breach had so extended that the no measures could have been permanently German-Austrian wedge could be thrust useful, because the disintegration of the through it to separate the Eleventh and Eleventh and Seventh Armies in Galicia Seventh Russian Armies The disaster was was but a token that the Russian armies complete and irreparable The command as a whole would fight no more of the army group was hastily transferred On 25th July it was announced that on from General Gutor to General Kornsloff, the Dynsk front, on which depended the but neither Korniloff's discipline, nor the defence of Riga, whole Russian armies had genius of Brussiloff, who made the exchange. left the trenches without waiting for the could alter the essentials of the situation, enemy to attack them. The Bolshevik

Korniloff lad taken 12,000 prisoners, he would not fight, and were now speeding had broken the resistance in front of him, away from the front in a contagion of

even keep his troops sober With sobriety All attempts to stop the flight were useless went discipline, and he was afraid to hazard The British armoured car squadron, which an advance beyond the Lomnica Thus, in had been operating in this region, was oc the region where the greatest successes had eupied, like others, not in contributing to been won, victory was no longer in incite- an advance, but in endersouring to stem ment Even Korniloff's soldiers began to a retreat On the night of 20th July the leave their positions. He was a general who breach was 20 miles wide and on 21st July would have made no bones about enforcing the German guns were shelling Brussiloff's the death penalty for disobedience or recent head quarters at Tarnopol, while cowardice, whitever might have been the chilings and broken Russian divisions fought orders of civiling chiefs, but he was helpless with one another for the means to get away in face of the spreading break down He Some regiments stood firm, and there are might have lept his own front, a charge many tales of swift and unexpected vengeance ordered by Prince Gagarin and a Caucasian on traitors and cowards such as, for example brigade against a defaulting regiment is that of one of the Socialist Government symbolic of the measures he was prepared. Commissaries. Kalinin, who ordered the to take, but he could not drugoon armies of antillery to fire on fugitives who had assimilated only too well the theories of The first of such armies to afford evidence preifist Socialism The Russian official that the rot was deadly was the Eleventh communique of 22nd-22rd July observed that which was nearly the most northerly point tinuing to retreat to the Screth and to sur-

which were simply, that the Russian armies promises of peace, land, and bread, well

supported by ingenious German propaganda, were possibly the determining cause in precipitating the wholesale defections; but the simplest explanation is that the Russian armies, which had fought so well for the Tsar, did not now know what they were fighting for, and had no longer any desire to fight German soldiers, whom they may have regarded, not without reason, as inspired by the same longing for peace as themselves. In the south, General Korniloff, whose own Eighth Army had fewer workmen and more Siberian and Little Russian soldiers than the others-in other words was a less sophisticated organization-was able to restore some sort of coherence to his front. Stanislau was abandoned on 25th July; Kolomea 27th July; and Czernowitz changed hands for the last time on 31st July, or thereabouts. Galicia was thus surrendered, and

the Bukovina followed. Yet Korniloff at one time, having safely brought his armies to a standstill on the River Zborocz, seemed to have a chance of once more making a Russian army. He succeeded in wringing from Kerensky's Government permission to enforce discipline by the restoration of the death penalty, and it almost seemed as if a military political regime under Kerensky and Korniloff might be stabilized. It was not, and for two reasons, which belong rather to the political than the military history of the time, but which may be briefly stated. The first was that Lenin, and those who acted with him, saw quite plainly that there could be no security for a Revolutionary Government while the Russian army, with all its traditions of subservience to aristocratic authority, existed; the second was that the larger portion of the Russian peasantry wished to shake off the shackles of the army, and all it represented, for ever.

There were several more refusals to fight

-on the Roumanian front for examplewhich were evidence of these tendencies, and the Russian armies, as factors in the international conflict, may be said to have ceased to exist almost as completely after the flight from Zborow as after the Treaty Brest-Litovsk, and the events which occurred immediately before of Brest-Litovsk. and after, gave to the German Army Command more complete freedom of action, and handed over to the Germans great stores of the guns, ammunition, and stores which Russia's allies had sent to her. But during the larger part of 1917 the Russian front was used as a place to which to send "resting" German divisions from the Western Front. Later it was used as a training-ground: and some of the German divisions which were to break through the British lines between St. Quentin and Cambrai in March, 1918, were trained on the Riga front.

Thus the Russian defection changed the face of the war in more than one aspect. It enabled the Germans to take risks in the West in 1917, as well as to supply a sufficient stream of reinforcements to meet the most powerful thrusts of the French or It made the dispatch of their divisions to aid the Austro-Hungarian British armies. forces, in the attack on General Cadorna's lines in Italy, a perfectly safe proceeding. It enabled them, despite the intervention of America, and the disappointment of their hopes in respect of the effectiveness of the U-boat campaign, to assemble a greater, and more preponderant, striking force than any they had yet commanded on the Western Front. Finally, it enabled them to train their force throughout the winter of 1917-8, and to equip it with completeness. In short, Russia's withdrawal from the conflict gave to Germany the best opportunity that she had enjoyed since September, 1914, of winning the war.

CHAPTER XIV

GERMANY'S OFFENSIVE ON THE WESTERN FRONT, 1918-TIRST PHASE

Allies, French and British, could do no other they were able to give their men a training than concert measures to meet the attack in new tactics with German thoroughness, which it was certain would be delivered and they had grounds for confidence alike in against them by the reinforced German their leadership, their organization, and their armies in the West. The circumstances military skill in major and minor tactics which contributed to the certainty were that The victories over Russia and Italy did not once again the military party in Germany grow smaller in contemplation, and it is safe had gained the ascendancy and that in their to assert that the German army chiefs were opinion the result of such an offensive could troubled with few doubts. There were be mathematically predicted. The mathe- doubters in the German political world, as matical probability that the war would be was reverled by the publication of the Lichbrought to an end by the action of German nowsky pumphlet-in which the late German submarines had broken down, very largely ambassador in London absolved the British because of the ready assistance lent by Foreign Minister from responsibility for the America of her destroyers, the destroyer war-and is was also shown by the declarabeing the most effective enemy of the sub- tion of you Kuhlmunn, Prince Lichnowsky's marine But the Germans still did not former coadjutor, that no decision of the believe that the United States armies war by military action alone was likely But could ever arrive in time to tip the scale. Lichnowsky was disgraced, you Kuhlmann of numerical forces against the Germans retired from his office of Foreign Minister, "They have not wings and cannot fly," said and Ludendorff and Hindenburg were an admiral in the Prussian Diet "They allowed to go on with their colossal precannot swim they will not come" So parations fixed were the German authorities in this began to get the U-boat menace within bounds, it became impracticable to remedy this mistaken political calculation

of the mire, and had immobilized the Italian aeropianes to repel the raiders armies by the remarkable and unexpected an great effort had been made at the Vervictory at Caporetto-the swiftest return for sailles conference of November, 1917, to a limited expenditure of energy that the war remove finally the anomalies which, in the

Throughout the winter of 1917-18 the mass all their strength on the Western Front.

The Allies prepared in a different way belief that, according to Admiral Sims, of Their front from a military point of view the United States navy, they deliberately was quiescent except for raids undertaken refrained from torpedoing American trans- to procure information, above it, in the air, ports in the earlier months of 1917, in order and behind it there was ceaseless activity not to exacerbate American feeling Later, The air raids were, like those which were when the joint anti-submarine campaign conducted across No Man's Land, designed to disturb the German concentrations and preparations, and were largely confined to these objects, though in response to an Even so, the Germans had good grounds, indignant outcry of French and English material and moral, for confidence They civilians a number of bombing raids were had nothing to fear from Russia, and as early carried out on German towns, especially on as November, 1917, had begun to withdraw those where their appearance disturbed the divisions from the Russian Front, they had manufacture of munitions, and compelled in October, 1917, once again pulled their the German authorities to follow the British incompetent partner, Austria-Hungary, out example of diverting a number of guns and

had then witnessed. They were free to presence of a strong and determined enemy,

left the Franco-British Front in the West to attack, it was necessary to construct secondbe governed by two commanders-in-chief, and third-line defences to meet their efforts. The arguments in favour of their retention. They had set the Allies a pattern in their were that the British army, though it oe- Siegfried and other defences, and especially cupied a less extended section of the line at such vital points as Cambrai, the Canal than the French, was the guardian of that du Nord, and Moronvilliers of what sound April, 1917, the chief bearer of the burden warning or the example. Depth of defence of warfare. There were angry protests in was imperatively necessary. The assault to Haig, or Sir William Robertson, bis col- divisions, with reinforcements probably league in England, should be made sub- called up from the east and south as the ordinate to anybody. Yet it should have movement developed. The total of effecbeen evident that since Sir Douglas Haig tives may bave been some 1,500,000 rifles, could hardly take on lumself the responsi- with another 1,000,000 in the artillery, bility of moving French armies, it was better cavalry, and auxiliary services on communithat a French general should move British cations. The number of machine-guns had armies than that there should be no single been increased, so that the first line of attack direction at all. The struggle to establish was almost a machine-gun line. The artilthis logical front was long and severe, though lery had been greatly strengthened, the use it has been put on record by General Foch of gas-shells developed, and a system of that Sir Douglas Haig loyally supported the intensive training had accustomed part of idea. It was not finally admitted till the the light artillery to go forward with the German attack on the British Fifth Army infantry. had driven its necessity home. In the mean-Barasis to guard 42 miles.

tactics of defence. More than that, since these precepts.
it was certain that nothing would be left The British Commander-in-Chief was wanting by such military scientists as the faced with an initial difficulty. He had never

animated and directed by a single command. Germans to give penetrating power to the nortion of the front on which the German defensive lines should be like, and it behoved blow would fall; and had also been, since the British Commander not to neglect the Great Britain at the suggestion that the be met was very heavy in point of numbers. British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas and rose to between 190 and 200 infantry

The major tactics of the German attack time there were substitutes for this "direct contemplated, not the limited offensive, action". Sir Douglas Haig, rather against which had been the type of operations conhis own judgment, took over a new stretch ducted by the Allies, but a continuous attack, of French line, extending the front of the in which a division, regarded in a sense as Fifth Army to cover the village of Barisis, self-supporting, should continue its attack seven miles south of the Oise. Twenty- progressively: the general idea being that eight miles of this extension had been pre- after the preliminary dash forward under viously covered by the French Tbird Army. artillery protection, battalion commanders It was carried into effect late in January, and should thenceforward have complete liberty by that time the British armies covered 125 of action. When any weak spot was found. miles of front, of which the Fifth Army was neighbouring battalions were to converge unduly stretched between Gouzeaucourt to on it. This system was to be carried out by the larger, as by the smaller units, the prin-As there could be no question of an Allied ciples being the progressive advance, the offensive till such time as the American avoidance of expensive pressure where renumbers should be available (and a sufficient sistance was great, and the search for points number of American divisions trained), it on which such resistance could be taken in became necessary to put this 125 miles into flank. The progress of the German offena sound state of defence: and, furthermore, sive, after its break-through of the front lines to instruct divisions (which, since 1916, had of the British Fifth Army, offered various been chiefly engaged in attacking) in new examples of the successful carrying out of

and at the same time there were the new defensive works to be built during the winter. Besides that. British divisions had been reduced from 13 to 10 battalions apiece. which was not merely a reduction in numbers efficiency while the new organization was being handled. The German numbers were its position so long as anticipated. being increased, the British numbers were being diminished: the German units were being trained with great care, the British units were not being sufficiently trained, and their organization was in a state of preparation. It may be added that, at the time of the German attack, the line which for its strength, and that an undue number Britain.

It seemed probable, alike to the British and attack would be made on the British lines south of Arras. All strategical considerations pointed to this probability; though there were obvious reasons which would impel the Germans to attack on the Ypres sector along the Menin road with a view to on the Fifth Army front, from Cambrai to St. Quentin, would have for its object the separation of the British and French armies, and the securing of the indispensable centre of communications at Amiens. In order to meet the highly probable eventuality that divisions in reserve. this attempt would be made, more than half the available British infantry was allo- armies: the Seventeenth (General Otto von cated to the defence of this sector; the whole Below), the Second (General von der Marof the cavalry was placed there, and arrange- witz), the Eighteenth (General von Hutier),

had as many men as he wanted; those that rail or motor of reserve divisions to meet came over in fresh drafts required training, emergencies at threatened points. All these which should have been at least as elaborate preparations were worked out in concert as that given by the Germans to their men, with the French Head-quarters Staff, and General Pétain's commitments included that of sending a French army corps across the Oise to aid the British Fifth Army in case of need. In the events which followed, this force was dispatched, but the British Fifth but involved some loss of smoothly-working Army, attacked in overwhelming force by the Germans, had not been able to maintain

Sir Douglas Haig learnt from his Intelligence Department on the 10th of March. 1918, that the attack was imminent, and should be launched within 72 hours. It was, in fact, begun with a bombardment of great intensity, launched from light and heavy guns, at five o'clock in the morning the Fifth Army had to defend was too long of 21st March. The infantry attack followed, at times which varied slightly in of reserves were being maintained in Great different sectors, about five hours later: and it extended along a battle-front of 54 miles. between the Sensée River and the Oise. French Head-quarters Staff, that the Ger- This was held by the British Third and man effort would be made at the point of Fifth Armies. The Third Army (General junction, or thereabouts, of the British and Sir J. H. Byng) held 27 miles of front from French forces; though there were possi- Gavrelle to Gouzeaucourt, with the 5th bilities that attacks might be made on the (General Fanshawe), 4th (General Harper), French on the Rheims sector, or with a view 6th (General Haldane), and 17th Corps to opening up the old paths about Verdun. (General Fergusson). Each division of the Both Sir Douglas Haig and Sir Henry Wilson, army held a front of about 4700 yards. The who had succeeded Sir William Robertson Fifth Army defended 42 miles of front from at the War Office, were convinced that the Gouzeaucourt to Barisis, with the 3rd (General Butler), 18th (General Maxse), 19th (General Watts), and 7th Corps (General Congreve). On the south of the Oise this front was held more lightly than elsewhere, because it was believed that the marshy ground would prevent any considerreaching the Channel ports. But an attack able German attack. The average length of front assigned to a division was 6750 yards. Thus, to meet the German attack, the Third Army had 8 divisions in line, with 7 in reserve. The Fifth Army had 11 divisions in line, and 3 infantry divisions and 3 cavalry

Against these were pitted 4 German ments were made for the rapid transport by and the Seventh (General von Boehm). All these armies had undergone intensive train- von Bochm, with the Seventh Army, of a ing, but the hammer-head of the attack was army corps and 6 divisions. the army of von Hutier, with 23 divisions, tin.

of a German division and a half to every ments. The blow struck by von Ludenthousand yards that General Gough's front dorff was an example of German military gave way. When the Germans attacked on skill at its best; and if ultimately it failed the the morning of 21st March a mist shrouded fault was not to be laid to von Ludendorff's all movements, but with such numbers skill, but to his under-estimate of the powers available it was impossible to lose their way, of resistance of his adversaries, and the This massing of 23 divisions for the crucial genius of the Generalissimo subsequently blow was the unforeseen circumstance which pitted against him. Another factor on which disconcerted the Allied plans, for it had been he did not reckon, but which operated against believed that General Gough, though he him, was that, in his own army, the spirit of would be unable permanently to resist the his shock divisions was not what it had been; forces probably brought against him, would and the German fighting machine, though be able to hold out for a longer period. The in appearance as smooth-working as ever, German organization for massing its men lacked the hard efficiency of which willfor so weighty and, in a great degree, so power, no less than man-power, is the hand, their destination unknown to them- seemed to be slipping away from them. selves, but their itinerary scrupulously calculated so as to bring them into position in very thorough, both in extent and in depth. time. The German engineers had taken Many other sectors, including those at the most minute care to prepare roads, Rheims, at the Scarpe, and at the Lys, were bivouacs, and dug-outs, and every degree included in it: but the greatest intensity was of camouflage was employed to keep the last reserved for the area of attack, where gas stages of concentration, and its extent, con-shells were used in reckless profusion, and cealed. General you Hutjer's attacking were especially directed at the ground divisions were disposed, with the 3rd Corps occupied by British batteries. The thick (General von Luttwitz) of six divisions, the white fog, which was ineffective in discon-9th Corps (General von Oettinger), and certing the German advance, made it im-17th Corps (General von Weber), on either possible for the British batteries to render side of St. Quentin, and the 4th Corps effective aid to the first-line defenders, the (General von Conta). These had 23 di- signals of whose outposts were not visible. visions between them, and afterwards 6 more Till one o'clock it was impossible to see 50 were added. South of this army was that of yards ahead, and the British machine-guns,

North of von Huticr's main attack were which attacked on the lower half of the British the armies of von der Marwitz (Second) of line. The German attack was divisible into 21 divisions in four army corps; and of two parts, the northern attack being directed General von Below (Seventeenth), with 22 against the Third Army, from the Sensée divisions. The total force employed in the River to the Cambrai road; the southern attack from first to last amounted to 78 attack from the Flesquières salient (oppo- divisions-considerably greater in numbers site Cambrai) to St. Quentin. Against this than the whole of the British armics. The southern half 40 German divisions were peril in which these stood was clearly underemployed (along a front of 48,000 yards), stood by the French, and every provision and of these 23 under von Hutier were had been made to succour them. That the directed against the 16,500 yards of the succour came too late to avert the first con-British Fifth Army's front nearest St. Quen- sequences of the disaster was to be attributed, less to any miscomprehensions of the danger, It was under this overwhelming pressure than to the excellence of the German arrangeunexpected a blow, was worthy of the highest foundation. Germany's adversaries fought praise. Great secreey was observed: the with desperate conviction. Von Ludentroops marched by night for a week before- dorff's armies began to erumble when victory

The bombardment by the Germans was

defence of many of the garrisons of the foradvance

longed and furious battle that was to follow, taken place, had served their purpose which held out

This isolated break-through was dealt with, could pass next day to attack the last barrier

and the forward guns covering this zone, but the Germans reached the outskirts of were useless Nevertheless, the attack had St Leger by the end of the day, and were been expected the battle stations had been giving the 24th Division (General Nicholson) manned, and the tenacious and desperate a very severe task to hold Croisilles The 51st Division (General Carter Campbell), ward redoubts, though it could not repel held its own resolutely against some very the attack, was efficacious in retarding its fierce attacks around Demicourt, Doignies, and Beaumetz-les-Cambrai, and the 10th On the front of 54 miles attacked on this Division (General Jeffreys) in the same area morning of 21st Maich, 1918, the Germans, essayed a counter-uttack in which a company opposed in the first place by no more than of Tanks were of great service. It partly 22 British divisions in line, attained the cleared the ground, but could not get the success which their preponderance in num- Germans out of Doignies A survey of the bers rightly should have assured them By operations on the Third Army front at the midday they had reached the front line of end of the day would have justifiably recorded the British battle positions on practically that its divisions had been very hard put to the whole extent of their attack, except where it to keep their footing, that at several points the salient bent round Plesquieres, and they had lost ground which they would be where, in he expectation of cupping it, they unable to recover, and probably would have did not press frontally forward with the same to sacrifice more, but that on the whole the determination. At several points the British. damage done was no more than was to have battle positions had been entered at others been expected from the weight of the longfierce fighting was going on in front of them impending blow, and that the first-zone The Third Army front, which, in the pro- battle positions, in which the fighting had

Army front, both because it was initially greater risk that the line of the Fifth Army, stronger, and because it was not struck with less strongly held, might snap under the consuch persistence, recoiled under the first tinuance of pressure as highly maintained shock It fought fiercely from the Canal or more severely applied, the same general du Nord to the Sensee River, astride the summary would have applied to the line Canal the 17th Division (General Robertson), from the Flesquieres salient to the Oise, and barred the German progress but farther in the sector south of the river. But there west Doignies and Louverval went Simi- were two danger-points, one of which was to larly, though in Lagricourt the 6th Division become critical, and almost decisive This (General Marden) still kept the Germans out was at Ronssoy, below the Flesquieres salient. of the first-line battle positions, Noreuil, and on the left of the Fifth Army The Longatte, and Ecoust-St-Menin had all Germans drove the British defenders from fallen That is to say, strongly fortified Ronssoy at noon, and Ronssoy was inside places in the British battle zone had been the second zone of the defensive positions lost to the enemy, who, by their possession, At the same time the villages of Hargicourt would be enabled to outflank or cut off others and Villeret, past which the Germans had flowed-in accordance with their pre-ar-The fighting in and about the battle zone ranged method of converging on weak points continued here, as elsewhere, with great in- so as to take resisting strong ones in flank tensity while light lasted, and afterwards and rear-were captured. This enabled the Lagracourt fell, and the Germans pushed German attack to come forward in a new and the attack between Noreurl and Crossilles so stronger wave, which submerged Templeuxheavily that at one time some of the more le-Gerard, still faither back in the British determined German infantry burst through second zone, so that a breach 3 miles wide the last defences of the first-line battle zone was here made through which the Germans

up there and two fortified villages Epehy, ment most marked. It was, on the other on the north, and Le Verguier on the south hand, a retirement which could be patched of the gap, both resisted with the utmost up, and it was nearest to French reinforcetenucity the efforts of the Germans to capture ments. It was not the critical point. That them, and so widen the gap still further. At was farther north. The dent south of the Epchy the 2nd Division was the garrison. St. Crozat Canal was straightened out by which kept the pass at Le Vermuer the 24th the withdrawal of the divisions of the 3rd Division The Tanks were of the greatest Corps, which had been fighting all day assistance in arresting the progress of the behind the canal. The withdrawal made

flood Osse, where the British commander might the next more northerly corps, the 18th in ordinary seasons, have relied on the This was pulled back to the line of the marshes to make any considerable attack. Somme Canal unlikely But long dry weather had made. All this was safely carried out during the the marshes easily passable, and the Germans night, not, it may be assumed, without loss, attacked over them in much superior force certainly not without deeds of sacrifice and They crossed the Oise Sambre Canal and daring, such as those involved in blowing zone between Essigny and Benay They late-over the St Crozat and Somme Canals below St Quentin, where the 4th German out, and though the British Commander sions from the force of General von Gayl, the German long promised blow was to fall sion (General W de L Williams), stood eventualities firmly to its ground, and in all this area. The weight of the attack on the British

of the third line. On the 21st they were held gress had been greatest, the British retirenecessary a corresponding alignment of the The second danger point was south of the right hand division the 36th, belonging to

the Ose River, and penetrated the battle- up the bridges-neither too soon nor too pierced the line also at Maissemy, but were. However, unpleasant the retirement may held there by the first Division (General have been, its accomplishment was a prudent Mackenzie), the 24th Division (General act of insurance, and for the moment it Daly) and the 1st Cavalry Division (General seemed as if it might be a sufficient one Mullens) It was the Essigny, Benay, Ly- Other withdrawals, of which the chief was Fontaine sector on the right of the line, at the l'esquicres salient, were also carned Army Corps of General Conta, and 2 days in Chief was now aware that the whole of were emerging that the dent was deepest on his armies he prepared to receive it Quessy, on the St Crozat Canal, was cap calmly, and put into execution, together tured by the Germans operating here The with General Petain, the plan for meeting British 18th Division (General Lee), aided it Part of the French Srith Army was by the 2nd Cavalry Division, held on to its moved up to help the troops on the right battle positions, though threatened by the of the British Fifth Army at once, and the advances on either side of it at Quessy and French First Army was set in motion to Benay At Roupy and Savy the 30th Divi- come up behind the Lifth Army for future

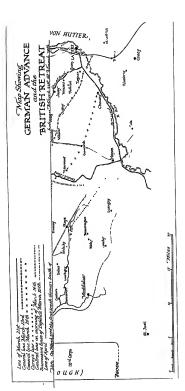
there were heroic and prolonged resistances. Fifth Army was such as to make it want all at many forward redoubts and strong posi- the help it could get. The Germans were tions But in general the German attack employing 19 divisions in this main attack, was infiltrating the battle zone, and the with ro more, satuated at various distances ground south of the St Crozat Canal was behind, ready to march up as the days of so undermined by their attack that by night- the battle wore on These all were under fall the impossibility of holding on to it was General von Hutier, whose reputation in demonstrable. The enforced retirements had this form of operation had been established removed brigade and divisional head-quar- at Riga. On the opening days this did not ters, so that there could be none of the usual comprise the whole German force of assault, ready intercommunication between them for south of the St Crozat Canal were other At this sector of the line the German pro divisions from General von Boehm's Seventh Army, and it was two of these which took north, the 9th and 21st Divisions retired day might be widened

on the 22nd, and through the mist came the German assault, fed without stint by reinforcements pressed forward in the teeth of Tifth Army's centre with a sagging flank artillery at short range and of the utmost. The German forces which had seized Maisfire which Lewis guns and machine-guns semy spread out thence, and concentrated could pour German machine-guns had on the weakness There were British held up many Allied attacks, both major and troops holding Holnon Wood, south of Le minor How was it that the British fire Verguier, but they were smothered, and was not able to do likewise? The answer streamed buck out of their battle positions is that along the greater part of the front it in disorder, passing through the ranks of did stop the Germans by the heaviness of their supports-the 20th Division Conthe losses it inflicted. But in the weakened sequently, the 50th Division found itself sector which von Hutier attacked the Ger- unable to keep the positions which it had mans were willing to pay the price. They taken up, and fell back fighting fiercely and had by great skill brought up an overwhelm- continuously from the Bernes-Bouehy deing weight of men, their attack was made fences till it could form, together with the properly and skilfully in great depth, and disturbed 20th Division, a new line from though they were heedless of the cost they Bouchy through Villencourt to Happenemployed their men very adroitly Von court, on the Upper Croznt Canal This Hutter was able to earry out on 22nd March was the retirement which led to that " piercone of the principles inculcated beforehand, ing" of the Fifth Army's positions between namely, that of converging on points which St Quentin and Le Verguier which was were weakening His divisions took St recognized in Sir Douglas Haig's bulletin Emilie, one door-post of the gap, early in of that day's occurrences, and was the first the morning, and also got a footing in Her- turning-point of the battle. Till that junevilly to the south of it, though a timely ture, the Fifth Army, despite its loss of men attack of the 1st Cavalry Division (General and positions south of the St. Crozat Canal. Mullens), which had been brought up, threw had been doing all that could have been exthem out of it, while the 66th Division pected of it, and the same remark applies (Major-General Malcolm) stopped them in with greater force to the Third Army But front of Roisel But von Hutier's forces henceforward the German gain of prisoners. were now able to push forward on eather and ground, guns and stores, went on proside of it, to take Le Verguier, and to gressively for some time, and all the reinthreaten both Roisel and Epchy, which had forcements that Sir Douglas Haig, or General been left in the air when St Emilie was Petain sent up could be applied only to

These places could only be held long should exhaust itself enough to enable the general line of defence

Quessy But the main effort at fracture to the line of defence between Nurlu and was to be made by General von Hutter at Equancourt, which straddled one of the main points where the 3-mile breach of the first roads leading back to Péronne) But the Bernes-Bouchy retirement, with the Ger-There was yet another musty morning mans pressing hard on it, left no time for precise re-alignment with the division yet farther south, and by that much left the stopping gaps till the German momentum

In ordinary circumstances a brigade or to be withdrawn from them, while those divisional head-quarters is in a fixed place who stood in them to the last, and the bat- and can be reached by its colleagues and other talions retreating from them, held back the divisions, in a retreat the intercommunicaadvancing Germans as best they could tion becomes less and less possible, with The troops fell back here to the third line increasing confusion as a consequence. The of defence between Bernes and Bouchy, retirement, marred as it was by confusion where their supports, the 50th Division and doubt, was relieved by many incidents (General Stockley), were waiting (To the of great bravery, in which, as in the example





here up to the third line of defence at half Bouchy to Villey eque was too thinly spread than had been ant cipated to hold the attack up though it ehecked it and was forced back at Poeailly. This tnumph. The night of the second day was opened a gap by way of the Fortille River spent by the commander of the Fifth Army could to the Somme

line

through the battle positions but the ad a swift counter attack of infantry and Tanks All the German progress here was too slov though as previously noted it was not so where the Germans though repulsed tem lethal to the British defence as that made porarily at one point had now taken all the at the Fifth Army's centre The divisions crossings they wanted and were building

of the 1st Buttahon of the Innishilling Fusi of von Weber and von Conta had to secure hers men fought unrehered to the end and the Crozat Canal and they succeeded after it is permissible to say that even in the worst a day's fighting for the bridge heads at moments the army never lost its belief in Quessy and La Tergnici. But they suf uself But it was very hard pressed hence fered severe losses at La Tergmer the prin forward and there were many critical cipal crossing as well as at La Montagne moments On this day the Germans were and Jussy and since it had never been practicable for the British wing to hold them past five and were still full of attack. The back here ultogether their forward move 50th British Division stretched out from ment was no quied er or more advantageous

The second day had been the German

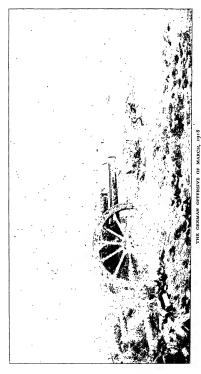
between the 50th Division and the 61st in salving his position. General Gough (General Mackenzie) and this was the rift ordered the 18th Corps (General Masse) in the third and last zone of defences through to fall back by a night march of 12 miles which during the evening and night fresh behind the Somme to a position south of German troops poured as they came up Vovennes keeping touch with the ard Corps All the British reserves that could have been (General Butler) on its right. North of got up had by this time been thrown in so these the 19th Corps (General Watts) and 7th that the reverse having occurred there was Corps (General Congreve) were to fall back nothing for the British commander to do but from 6 to 8 miles in the night so as to hold to admit it and get his army back as best he the bridge head defences round Peronne through Cross Wolmans Monehy Lagache Although things had gone so much worse and \ranges Thence along the third than had been expected here the defence battle zone line a junction would be mide elsewhere had not done badly. On the about Equancourt with the Third Army Third Army front the line had been shortened It was not an easy retreat Rear guards were opposite Cambrai and heavy German attacks furnished first by troops of the 20th 50th at Hayrincourt and Villers Plouich had been and 30th Divisions and the Germans fought heavily beaten off. So also had others at with them all night. In conformity with Hermies and Beaumetz though here the the retirement of the Fifth Army behind the 51st Division had endured two days of Somme the Third Army let go still more of uninterrupted battering. Farther north the the Flesquicres salient and drew its right fighting had been as hot as the Germans buck through Metz to Equancourt while could make it for apart from the necessity farther north other vithdrawals to battle of pinning Sir Douglas Haig's reserves down positions in the reir were made between a break at this northern pivot would have Henin sur Cojeul and Tampoux It would spelt irremediable disaster to the British have been too much to expect that a line harassed and battered as was that of the At Vaulx Wood an attack did get right British could male these withdrawals without mistakes in face of an enterprising vantage was wrested from the Germans by enemy. The retirement under pressure opened out a new gap towards morning about Mory which is some 16 miles west of Cam and too expensive. At the other extremity, brai. That presaged trouble and there was of the line (though not towards La Fere) the nothing to be hoped for in the region of the German progress was much more marked Fifth Army s right wing on the Crozat Canal up holdings on the British side of the canal covned by hard fighting rear-guards, had in preparation for new onslaughts

about Ham the rear-guards furnished by the as an army 36th, 20th, and 61st Divisions threw the contrary, well managed

continued their retreat across the Canal du With the Crozit Canal gone, with the right. Nord to the third-zone positions near Ytres. centre of the Fifth Army staggering, with and the 7th Corps (General Congreve) should seams and cracks opening elsewhere, General have been falling back parallel with them Gough resolved that he dare not ask his on to the canal But the movement left a troops to stand up another day in their in- gap between the two corps, and the Germans secure positions against the German rein- pushed into it despite all the efforts of the forcements, which the Allied aeroplanes could 47th Division (General Goringe) to close descry packing the roads as they still marched up Consequently, the 5th Corps was up He decided that the 19th and 7th hustled back beyond the battle zone, and Corps could not hold the lines defending were left on the 23rd (evening) fighting in Peronne, and ordered the 19th Corps back the open about Rocquigny, while the 7th to the Somme, with the 7th to follow, after Corps was struggling to keep its footing on temporarily holding a short line in front of the wrong side of the Tortille River, near it This is the decision for which General Bouchavesnes, and the old Somme battle-Gough was criticized The subsequent and front of Sailly-Saillisel There was, conconsequent withdrawals were serious, the sequently, south of Ytres, great confusion, difficulties of rectifying the breaches in the little coherence, and the prospect of further line which opened out, as these and inter- losses The redeeming feature of the situadependent withdrawals were made, were tion was that down to Ytres the northern great. But it is at least arguable that had, line was swinging back in good order, the the decision not been taken the resultant disturbing feature was that south of it, where chaos would have been worse. It was quite the line was breaking back, rather than bad enough. In the first withdrawals to the swinging back, a breach should be opened Somme a gap had been left at Ham The not between brigades, divisions, or corps, Germans at once perceived, and exploited, but between the French and British armies it, and crossed the Somme wherever here. On the afternoon of this critical day General abouts a bridge had been left standing. Petain had agreed to send up the French There were not many the Royal Engineers. Third Army as quickly as possible, to take with the utmost devotion and courage, had over the imperilled sector south of Peronne blown up most of them as soon as the re- -where, not to mince matters, the British treating corps troops were across At and Fifth Army was in danger of losing coherence

Before this could be done, however, there Germans back again, and held them till the were many moments of penl to be passed, retirement was made safe, and the 50th such as anse from unforseen occurrences-Division, despite its hard two days' fighting especially in the demolition of the mechanexperience, did the same farther north. Here ism of keeping touch during a retirement, at any rate the retreat, though costly, was and every shp had to be paid for in men and far from being disastrous. It was, on the guns. On the other hand, as the Germans advanced farther over a shattered field of But something very awkward had hap- battle, their difficulties increased, together pened, as often it does where two armies with the price of the advance. On the 24th join The Germans, everywhere seeking they pressed past the Ytres battle zone, the for new openings, had struck hard at Mory Canal du Nord, and the Sailly-Saillisel line, -where the 40th Division won back the so that the Third Army's right wing had to village after it had been lost-and at Beugny, be swung back behind Bapaume South at St Leger, and at Vaulx, all without effect, of this the irremediable breach gave the but at the junction of the Third and Fifth Germans ample elbow-room in which to Armies the blow went home The divisions press forward, to cut up isolated British units, of the 5th Corps (General Fanshawe), and to press severely other and larger ones





ritish gunners firing point-blank into advancing masses of the enemy

which had not yet found a position of stability. Danger was averted only by prompt retreat. The 4th and 5th Corps were both withdrawn behind Bapaume, the first towards Ervillers and Grevillers, the second towards Le Sars, and every reinforcement that could be swept up from Albert was hurried up to support the 7th Corps behind Cléry and Combles. Their good fighting quality checked the Germans in their stride. and enabled a new line to be taken up from the Somme to Longueval. By nightfall the 7th Corps had reached its position, and the 5th Corps prolonged the line through Ligny and Thilloy. The danger was far from being over, however, and the Germans were making great efforts to aggravate it by seizing nine crossings of the Somme south of Péronne (at Péronne the Somme makes a right-angled turn), and a bridge-head at Pargny, as well as that at Ham. Lastly, on 23rd and 24th March, in the extreme southern area between the Somme and the Oise, a very determined attempt was made to break up the British resistance before the French reinforcements could arrive. It failed in its ultimate intention, though Chauny had to be relinquished. In the course of the night French and British troops together were aligned afresh on a new line covering Noyon. No break was likely to follow here; the danger such as it was remained where it had been, in the area of retreat of the Fifth Army.

The first rub came at the old unclosed gap between the 4th and 5th Corps which were not properly in touch, at Grevillers, east of Bapaume, and Bihucourt, both of which had prematurely to be given up. A number of German attacks were beaten off, but in the late afternoon of the 24th the divisions began to fall back individually towards the Ancre, and the gap widened. When the Germans, pressing through it, reached Courcelette and pushed forward advanced units to Pys and Irles, the flank of the 4th Corps behind Grevillers became seriously compromised, and it was obliged to retreat still farther to avoid an attack from behind. It swung the line of the Third Army with it, but finally found touch with the 6th Corps at Boyelles. The other YOL VI,

divisions of the Third Army were brought back by Sir Julian Byng, now in charge of all movements north of the Somme, to a line joining Bray-sur-Somme with Albert. There was still an awkward gap about Serre, but the Third Army had now almost found its feet—and the limiting position to which it could be forced. Reinforcements from the armies of General Plumer and General Horne were arriving from the north, and the Germans were finding it harder to hit a sustained blow over the broken roads of the stricken field.

But the situation was far from being as satisfactory south of the Somme, where they had not a compacted army, but a fragmentary one, to deal with. Most of the prepared defensive line along the Somme River and Canal had vanished, and what was left was endangered by the withdrawal of those divisions which had been parallel in line north of the river, to a point so far back as Bray. Moreover, there were no immediate reinforcements to put in to respond to a renewed push on the part of the Germans. The local reserves had gone, the French reinforcements were not yet up, though they were coming; and every mile that the British irregular line went backward gave a longer concave curve to defend. Southward, where the French reinforcements were nearest, the situation, though damaging, was not desperate. The Germans got forward in the night of the 24th, and at dawn of the 25th were battering the heights of Noyon, where the Canal du Nord joins the Oise. A hopeful sign was that the British guns were got away from the heights, thanks to some dismounted Canadian cavalry and a fine counter-attack by the 18th Division, to which were joined the efforts of a French division; and some French Tanks helped to retard the Germans as they debouched from Guiscard. But as Noyon and Guiscard were now gone, the British forces which had fought defensively there were now withdrawn, and on the morning of the 26th the 3rd British Corps handed over the duties to the Third French Army, and was gradually moved away northwards to help out the hard-pressed 5th Corps.

At Nesle a new crisis had supervened.

East of Nesle the Libermont Canal and the Canal du Nord run northwards towards the south-and-north-flowing Somme. North of Nesle the Germans, entering Licourt, had made a gap between the 18th and 19th Corps, and widened it by entering Nesle and crossing the Libermont Canal. Part of the canal was still held, but the 10th Corps, being foreed back on Chaulnes, could not hold it safely. The 10th therefore had to fall some distance west of Chaulnes, taking up a new position to miles between Hattencourt and Estrées. This still left a gap which the Germans sought at Liancourt Wood. It was closed before the Germans thrust could do much damage, by a brigade (61st) of the 20th Division, which had been brought up in motor-lorries fresh from the fighting farther south, and this heroic expedient enabled the rest of the division to withdraw more striking example followed. The Fifth complete control and responsibility. Army was at the end of its resources, and General Gough perforce accepted a suggestion made by General Grant to organize a force out of army schools personnel, tunnelling companies, Canadian and American engineers-every man in short he could lay his hands on-and to dispose them (26th Army's line impinged.

troops quick to seize the opening, moving of this deployable situation.

past their northern flank, were forced back beyond Rove, thus further opening the gap. It had to be closed. It was closed by two British divisions-the 20th and 26th-which were thrown back into the battle after having been once withdrawn. The 36th, though outflanked and all but surrounded, held on at Andechy for a day, till 27th March, and just saved the situation. On the 26th, also, the Germans had simultaneously spread out from Nesle towards Rove directly, with a view to aiding the progress of their wedge and of seizing Montdidier, where the French were detraining. The delaying action of the 10th and 16th Divisions frustrated this design also; and this day saw an end to the German chances of separating the French and British forces. A momentous decision, of which such indivisibility was the symbol. was taken on the same day. The command , through Roye. It will be seen how the of the Allied armies passed into the hands of retreat was living from hand to mouth. A General Foch, who theneeforward assumed

The worst was then over: but on the 27th. as on the 26th, and as on days to follow, the British Third and Fifth Armies had to sustain many hard blows, and to pay yet more for their earlier reverses. The lower part of the Third Army's line, from Albert to Bray, had been successfully taken up: but March) on the old line of the outer Amiens by the mistake of the local commander it defences between Mezières, Marcelcave, and was supposed to be a temporary position. Hamel. The command was afterwards and he retired from it towards the Anere. handed over to General Carey, and " Carey's The mistake could not be remedied, and the force" became the last barrier in front of Fifth Army's line, which reached the Somme Amiens, except for the thin and battle-weary about Proyart, 5 miles farther along the river line in the Hatteneourt-Frise positions, than the new front of the Third Army, was which were taken up with misgiving on 25th left unprotected. Stop-gap expedients were March. If that line proved vulnerable the ineffectual, and naturally proved expensive; forces holding it were to fall back to one and when, on the 27th, the Germans seized behind it, Le Quesnel-Rosières-Proyart, 5 Proyart and, having crossed the Somme miles in front of Carey's force. Proyart is along the 5 miles of unprotected river, began near Bray on the Somme, where the Third to attack the British division (27th), which was there, this force had hardly any way out On the 26th, as anticipated, Hattencourt of its unfortunate and desperate predicament. was attacked, and the divisions had to fall To make matters worse, there were no reinback fighting, to the line indicated. But forcements between Provart-Rosières and this retreat opened out one of those hardly Amiens except that heterogeneous body, to be avoided gaps between forces-on this "Carey's force", to which was delegated the occasion between the British and their holding of the last ditch. The luck and French allies. The French, finding German courage of the British army pulled it out

Part of the 1st Cavalry Division was hurried across the Somme from the north; a counter-attack was organized by mixed troops of 2 divisions south-west of Proyart; troops of another division came across after the cavalry; and finally, south of Rosières, mixed troops of yet another 3 divisions held solidly to a 6-mile front. All these blocks in the traffic, by almost individual efforts, kept the Germans from coming along on a wide front of their own, but it did not prevent them from infiltrating the British front; and the next day, the 28th, there were further retreats, several of which had to take the second-best route, till between the Rivers Avre and Luce the wearied, disjointed British divisions were forced back from their temporary front on Marcelcave and Vrely to Carey's line. But if the British resistance was now almost at its last gasp, the Germans were winded too. The pace, the difficulties of getting up across the broken country, had begun to tell on them. They could find the force and the forces for local attacks, but, in the language of the prize ring, though both combatants were staggering, the Germans could not give a knock-out blow. In the end "Carey's force", aided by the cavalry division from the north, and such remnants of the Fifth Army as were not reforming behind it, sufficed to hold the pass. Germans broadened out the salient; they made progress both on the Luce and the Avre, and pushed back the French as well as the British in operations extending from 29th March to 2nd April. On the latter date their bolt was shot, and near the Somme they had received a set-back on a small scale at the hands of a very mixed force of British cavalry, Australians, and United States Engineers.

But before that a reverse of a much more serious kind had put an end to Luden-dorff's hopes of converting the second of Somme battle into a decisive German victory. Somme battle into a decisive German victory. On 28th March a renewed attempt had been made to break the northern pivot of the Third Army by an attack on either side of the valley of the Scarpe, the attack spreading northwards towards Gavrelle so as to take in the right wing of the First Army, held by the 13th Corps (General de Lisle). On the

north bank of the Scarpe 3 German divisions were told off for the first line of assault. They were fresh divisions brought up for the purpose, and the 2 German divisions already occupying the sector were to act as reserves to push the assault home by the method of attack in depth. The position aimed at was the line Vimy-Bailleul-St.-Laurent-Blangy; and this having been attained, Ludendorff proposed to send in 3 shock divisions next day to storm the Vimy Ridge. To defend the position Sir Douglas Haig had 2 divisions in line, the 4th (General Matheson), and the 56th (General Dudgeon). South of the Scarpe 4 divisions were to take Arras and the heights (which the 3rd and 15th Divisions were defending), and, in order to prevent reinforcements being sent to the sectors of greatest pressure, 11 other German divisions were sent to engage the British line as far as Bucquoy. The whole of the fulldress plan broke down, the defence being aided by a factor which operated in the British favour for the first time in the great offensive, namely, the weather.

Instead of a foggy morning, 28th March presented the British defence with one which was an artilleryman's ideal. In consequence—and it is a consequence remarkable in an engagement of such magnitude—the British artillery and machine-guns cut the attack to pieces before it got under way. Sir Douglas Haig pays a tribute to the courage with which the German infantry advanced over and gain to the assault in face of a blast of fire as withering as German ingenuity had ever devised when assaults were launched against their own armoured lines, and to the desperation with which they strove to cut their way through the gaps made in the wire. But it was all in vain. The first onset of six waves collapsed in the morning; a second failed in a similar way in the afternoon; and by nightfall the British were reconstructing their outpost line. Their battle zone had not been approached. South of the Scarpe the Germans had attacked on a wider front. They got nearer: it cost them more. The Guards Division and the 31st Division held off their attacks without much difficulty. The 42nd and 62nd Divisions, with some Australians, beat off others, made British Fifth Army-now engaged in their task of extricating themselves under General Rawlinson1 (Fourth Army)-put an end to any further enlargement of the gains of the first and greatest of the German 1918 offensives.

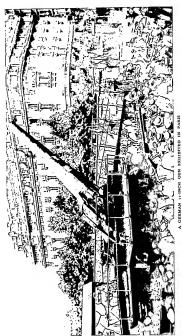
The strength of the Allied resistance thenceforth increased day by day, as General Debeney was still further reinforced by units of the First French Army (General Humbert). The German organization made but one more attempt to test it, when, on 4th-5th April, they attacked the slowly-consolidating up, to fight what may be described without Franco-British positions south of the Somme, fear of misunderstanding as a losing battle The first attack spread over the whole British for Rove and Novon; and the masterly stand front from the river to Hangard, where the of the 5th Corps, French Third Army, Third French Army dovetailed with the under General Pollé, from 26th March on-British Fifth, and beyond. Two assaults wards, was one of the events which kept were made with large forces on 4th April, the Germans from enlarging their advance the first being repelled on the right, but dangerously to the south, and eventually having more success on the left towards the forced them to transfer their principal attack river, and the second reversing these results to the north of the Somme, with what unand pushing back the combined Franco- fruitful results, at Arras for example, has British forces about Hangard Wood. The been told. But in front of Montdidier. next day the attack was resumed both at where the First French Army was detraining, Hangard Wood and in the river sector in the and at other points the situation was often effort to improve these advantages. But highly critical, and disaster was averted only the ground gained was slight, and the cost by a hair's-breadth, and by the skill and to the Germans disproportionate. The resolution of French commanders and French Third British Army was attacked and lost soldiers. The French losses were not light; a great many lives without commensurate Rawlinson experienced with those of the in any sense of results achieved in that they losses both of British and French went on, may have partially masked their forthcoming and that though at one time, on the British offensive at the Ypres salient, known as the front, "Carey's force" seemed the forlorn the foregoing attempt to outline the chief the defence of the road to Paris. features of the Arras-Cambrai-St.-Quentingiven to the movements of the "wing of sacrifice "-the British Fifth Army and its

more pertinaciously, at Ablainzeville and supporter the Third Army. But such a Rucquoy. The whole day was a German version would be one-sided without at least failure, which, apart from any losses that a mention of the very grave risks which the might be inflicted on the divisions of the French Third Army incurred in coming to the Fifth Army's assistance, and in taking over a situation of the greatest difficulty and

uncertainty at insufficient notice. It had been supposed that the Fifth Army, however heavily assailed, would be able to hold out for six days. It gave way, in fact, on the third, and by the end of the second was affording evidence of the precarious hold it had on its position. The French Third Army, as it is now easy to see, should have been more closely aligned with the British right rear. As it was, it had, after coming part of its hold on the village of Bucquoy, and they had the same difficulty in extricatbut on this front also the Germans expended ing some of their divisions that General gain. The operations of the two days were Fifth Army. But it should, perhaps, be a reverse to them, and were only justifiable made clear that after the 27th, though the Lys Battle, and have compelled the Franco- hope in front of Amiens, yet by that date British command to hesitate in prematurely the French had brought up yet another removing units from the Amiens region. In Reserve Army, under General Favolle, for

That road being barred, General Luden-La-Fère Battle most prominence has been dorff turned to the second part of his plan, the bid for the Channel Ports. Sir Douglas Haig had been compelled to use up his reserves, and for reinforcements had rightly refused to deplete the sector

¹General Gough relinquished the con Army, 28th March.



It has a range of 25 miles and was intended for the bombardment of Amicos Captured with its anse



His policy had been proved right by made by the army of General von Quast, could draw, and when the imminence of a armies acted in concert. Von Quast's known, the reinforcements drawn thence those on either wing were designed for the were returned, but were far from being at demonstrative attack, while the assault to full strength, or fully rested, after their be pushed home was made in the centre severe experience on the Cambras St -Quen- by an army corps (von Kraevel) operating 40th 34th, 25th, 19th, and 9th Divisions respectively, of Generals von Stettin (right), all of which were in the front line of the Lys von Carlowitz, and von Bernhardi General battle field at the end of the first week in Sixt von Armin's army operated in three handicap, would have felt some confidence hardt (right), and Marschall that no attack launched over the sodden Von Kraevel's army corps was set in spot

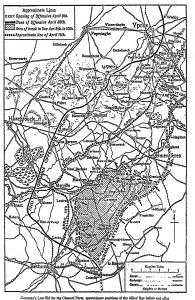
about the Vimy Ridge, where a successful. The first German attack on oth April, in German blow would have been fatal the direction of Festubert-Armentieres was the results of the unsuccessful blow struct on the next day the army of General Sixt there on 28th March The Flanders von Arman attacked between Hollebeke and Front had been the only one on which he Armenticres, and thenceforward the two new German offensive in this quarter became advance was made in five columns, of which tin battle field. This was specially true of the in three columns under the command. April Had the spring been is rainy as the columns under the commands respectively preceding autumn, the British, despite their of Generals Sieger (left corps), von Eber-

ground could have lead any results of great motion in the thick for of the early morning. value to its designers. But the ground had a circumstance favourable to their deterdried in weeks of rainless weather, and pre- mined attricks in mass, because, as in the parations had accordingly been made for a Cambrai-St Quentin onrush, the British voluntary withdrawal near Passchendaele, artillery could not get to work on the which would shorten the line, and disor- assaulters They pushed forward very ganize such German preparations for advance rapidly, and broke into and through the as were visibly being made here, and also Portuguese trenches at once, and their for the relief of the Portuguese troops, which attack quickly spread over the whole front had been too long in the trenches near the occupied by the 55th and 40th Divisions. south of the salient, and had not been hither- which were respectively south and north to as highly tried as British divisions. The of the Portuguese. It soon became apparent, British preparations were anticipated by the in the words of some of the wounded Germans, and General Ludendorff, with Midlanders, who began to stream back, true multary instinct, launched his attack that "Terry had come over" in great force, at the unexpected moment, and at the weak and that a heavy attack was in progress over a 10-mile front from the Bois Grenier (Ar-The first attack was made on 9th April mentieres) to La Bassee Two divisions (after a feint preparatory bombardment on just relieved from the Somme fightingthe 7th) on the northern portion of the front the 51st and 50th-were moved up on either held by the First Army (General Horne), sade of Neuve Chapelle to co operate, the with the 11th Corps (General Haking), and 50th going to Laventie The Germans con-15th Corps (General du Cane) On 10th April tinued to come along fast, and after four the attacl, exploiting its first success, spread bours' fighting broke through the forward to the right of the Second Army (General defences of the 40th Division (north) and Plumer), where the qtb Corps (General spread farther northwards in spite of all Hamilton Gordon) was situated The 15th the machine-gun detachments could do Corps, early in the battle, was transferred to They got beyond Laventie, and actually the Second Army front, and other re-arrange- behind part of the division there, which was ments and interventions became necessary holding the village of Petillon. In consewhen the German tentative assaults were quence, this division, losing heavily on its enlarged as their successes became proven right, had to swing back till, instead of facing east, it faced south, linking up Bois Grenier, forced crossings at Estaires and Pont Riqueul Fleurbaix, and Sailly-sur la Lys

through the swing doors, had flattened the side, but it was clear that when their attack northern one open They did not flatten was renewed with more guns next day they the southern door so effectually. They could not be held off, so the British troops heavily attacked the 55th Division, south holding the bridges blew them up as thor of the broken Portuguese sector, and bose oughly as they could in the circumstances it back on its left, but its main position. It would have been worse than useless to remained firm, and it formed a flank facing try to hold them, for the Germans had north between Festubert (north of Grenchy) vigorously pursued their advantage against and Le Touret, which, later in the day, was the 40th Division, and, following on its strengthened by the 51st Division This heels, had clossed the river at Bac St Maur circumstance, surveyed at a distance of over a swiftly-constituted emergency bridge time, stands out clearly as the definitive and then had unhesitatingly laid siege to moment of the Battle of the Lvs The Cross du Bac, a mile on the other side-a Germans thereafter, pushing their attack fine feat of arms Next morning (10th) they with all the force and skill of which they were were firmly established here on the British capable, attained considerable successes, and side of the river, and began to seek other at times seemed to be on the verge of break- crossings at Lestiem and Estaires Here ing through to the function of the British again was another turning-point, impercommunications serving that area. They ceptible at the time. It took the Germans won back all, and more, than the British a whole day's street and enclosure fighting armies had gained here in four years of with 2 British divisions hereabout, the 50th painful warfare, and, besides the losses they and the 40th, before Estaires was firmly in inflicted, took many thousands of pusoners their hands, and more than that before and several hundreds of guns But the they reached Steenwerk. This was far too pivot at Givenchy, which the 55th and 51st slow, though it must be conceded that their Divisions formed on the first day of the battle, difficulties in getting guns over the ground was never broken, the German divisions were very formidable. In hand-to hand broke on it in their attempts to assault it, fighting their quality was not great and it was here, as General Ludendorff after- Their comparative failure here was conwards explained in his memoirs, that he first cealed by the spreading of their attack elselearned that the spirit of the German troops where, for on the 10th General Sixt von was giving The failure to take Givenchy Armin's attack opened in the sector north of was to him a bitter disappointment and a Armentieres. It began in mist, like the danger signal

They were driven back again, so that at the Thus the Germans, pressing as it were close of the day they were still on the wrong

other, and had a success which was greater The gap the Germans made was to the than the first when the quality of the opera north of this, and through it they poured at tion is taken into account. The lesser part first so fast that the rear defences could not of it was at its northern extremity, where the be manned The right of the 40th Division, Messines positions, held by the 25th and still being forced back towards the Lys, had 10th Divisions, were attacked. The ma to cross it, the rest of the division succeeded chine - gun outposts were overrun, and in holding on to an awkward position cover- General von Sieger's columns worked their ing Erquinghem and Armenticies for the way forward along the streams on either side rest of the day The 51st Division and the of Ploepsteert Wood They took part of the 50th Division gave full employment to all wood by midday, and captured Viessines the units they had at command, including village and its garrison. Thence they spread their newly-arrived drafts, in trying to hold over the northern part of the ridge, past the bridge-heads of the Lawe River The Hollebeke to the Ypres Commines Canal, Germans brought up guns-no easy matter and pushed the British back to the Wytin that crater pitted, flat country-and schaete section of Messines Ridge A



Germany's Last Bid for the Channel Ports: approximate positions of the Allies' line before and after Ludendorff's Offensive in April, 1918

of the 9th Division restored Messines and schaete still was held Wytschaete, but not the situation, for it was Ploegsteert to Armentieres the situation was of the line below Ploegsteert exposed the 24th Division at Armentieres, and enabled the northern wing of von Quast's army frontal attack, it was now threatened dangerretreated in good order

The fighting, and the German advance, pursued the normal course next day The right hand pivot between Givenchy and the Lawe River sustained and repelled all the German assaults against it but the cup north of it was steadily hollowed out. The Germans pushed back the line between Locon and Estaires, and, pressing on to Lestrem, compelled the thinned but yet resisting line of the 50th Division to go back slowly from Estaires to Merville The retreat was reluctant, and the division inflicted great losses on the Germans while at Estaires, and while retiring from it Neither Neuf Beiquin nor Merville could be held, and Steenwerk was marked to follow them A more serious and galling sacrifice was imminent in the area of Sixt von Armin's attack General Sieger's and von Stettin's divisions, pressing on strongly from Ploegsteert towards Neuve Eghse, automatically outflanked the 34th Division, which had temporarily held Eglise had made it impossible to hold on their left, troops of 3 other divisions (25th, here The order was given for evacuation,

counter-attack by the South African brigade of Neuve Eglise and Wulveighem Wyt

Although in retrospect it is possible to clear that Messines could not be permanently see that the German movement was disanheld against strong renewed attacks. From pointing to its planners, it seemed at that moment extremely threatening to the British still less subject to restoration, for the sagging commanders on the spot, who, knowing how worn and tried were their own divisions, and how few the reserves on which they could the troops of you Stettin to find touch with draw, could hardly view without forcbod ing an increase of pressure such as the This division had already sustained a heavy Germans had been able to bring to bear throughout the first five or six days of their ously on both flanks, and was prudently southerly offensive. The famous Order of withdrawn to the other bank of the Lys It the Day which Sir Douglas Haig issued on destroyed the bridges behind it, so that it 11th April reflects these apprehensions, though it stills them by the confidence of its appeal to the hard-pressed divisions on the Lys to fight it out 1 The moment chosen for the appeal coincided miraculously with the birth of an urgent necessity on 12th and 13th April, while the defenders waited for reinforcements to arrive On 12th April one of the more desperate attacks which the Germans made on the left centre of the 51st Division, in front of the La Bassee Canal, seemed to have gone near to success when the front was broken near the Riez du Vinage, but the attack was at last stopped by the courage and resource of two batteries of the 255th Brigade

The same day witnessed the concentration of forces under Generals von Carlowitz and von Beinhards on the thin British front from Neuf Berguin to Steenwerk, where two gaps were prised open at La Becque and Doulieu, to open the way to Merris and Bailleul This was one of those damaging openings which may sap the whole of a position, for east of Nieppe in its retreat from Armentieres, and Merris were all the tioops and material compelled its further retirement towards awaiting withdrawal from the Messines area Bailleul Armentieres, of course, was gone Every effort was made to stop the Germans So also was Messines The South African from coming through A brigade (33rd Brigade had retaken it, and the other division Division) was first crammed in, and, followwas still standing solidly at Hollebeke, but ing it, pioneers, education officers, cyclists the German southward advance to Neuve -anybody and everybody available On

and in a few hous Messines, Hill [5], and that section of the Messines ridge made so that section of the Messines ridge made so the famous in 1917, had been renounced, and the line re drawn from Wytschaete in front fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight on title and —Ser Douglas Haig s Army Order 11th fight of the title and the service of the service o

14th, and 49th) stood up to the heavy attack a pause for reinforcements and guns, the ing space

pushing up in force through the fog, the together with 2 fresh divisions from reserve. Germans turned against the attenuated line on Bailleul and the Ravelsberr heights. of the 29th and 31st Divisions, strung in front Bullcul's natural redoubt. The pressure of Nieppe Forest from Alcrville to Vicux was too great for any resistance which the Beroum On their left, roughly parallel to 2 depicted British divisions-22rd and 24th their line, the Germans had entered Merris -could offer there, and, despite the best also, 4 miles from Hazebrouck. It was as fight these could put up, the Germans gained trying a situation as any that had been faced, a footing on the ridge's eastern end, and but it was vital that these 2 divisions should worked along it till by dusk they held it all not let the enemy through towards Haze- Bailleul fell with its ridge, and at midnight brouck, where the 1st Austrulian Division the British line was falling back to the dewas detraining. The Germans saw the fences between Meteren and Dranoutre point Their first assaults were made on Simultaneously, the Passchendaele Ridge, the south towards Merville, and broke in and all the ground so hardly won there with failure agunst the Guards 4th Brigade. They the best blood of Britain and her Domin made attack after attack on other parts of sons in the sodden October of 1917, was the line, and got field-guns up to point-blank given up It was a black day, in which the range They tore gaps in the line, and the clearing sky was hard to see Yet it was Germans at last seized Vieux Berguin in an clearing, and the Trench reinforcements expiring effort which had cost them more promised by Marshal Foch were close even than the severely-punished defenders behind the shortened salient but the capture came too late The rst Australian Division detrained, dug itself in down of the German energy General von in front of the forest, and the German Quast's army south of Meteren was evi chance of reaching Hazebrouck fled, never dently finding the task of making its way to return

the same day for Neuve Eglise-lost and it, and General Sixt von Armin, with better retaken-and here was severe fighting along going in the north, had now no opportunithe road to Bailleul. The three divisions ties of surprise. Everything had to be -33rd, 34th, and 49th-guarding this fought for, and he was suffering more losses sector, which extended to Meteren, were than he could inflict against lines which were asked only to hold the Germans off till a again receiving the support of neurer artillers better foothold could be secured, and the Nevertheless, the Germans were far from 14th Division was withdrawn to the Ravels- being done with They made a number of berg heights covering Bailleul on the night strong attacks on the line from Meteren and of the rath, and Neuve Eglise, after holding Wytschiete, and forced their way at a cost out two days and a night, and being taken into both villages. This preliminary was only house by house, was given up on the followed next day by the first attempt to could be made of their opening, and, after complement of gas shells But the attack

of you Carlowitz's troops, who sought to 15th April began with an attack on their part enlarge the opening, and stopped them in on the new British front at Bulleul. The time to give the British line another breath- first as rult which was repelled was at Wytschacte It was followed by an attack It lasted only till next morning, when, made by the picked German Alpine Corps,

A perceptible sign was a distinct slowing across the crater filled, market - garden A less important struggle took place on country south of Armenticres too much for 14th The limits of the German advance reach Mont Kemmel Von Armin's enwere now being set, and, with one exception, gineers had built up roads behind his advance the British were able to take up and maintain with remarkable enterprise, and along them the new defensive front on which the Head- on the firmer ground guns could be, and quarters Staff had decided But the Ger- were, got up, so that the assault was mans were too capable not to make all that launched to the accompaniment of a heavy Merville to Givenchy, and lacked no assist- the 49th, held the ground ance of heavy-artillery preparation, or of The French bore the brunt of the heaviest fresh resources in men At Givenchy and at fighting, and the day did not go well for Festubert so ferocious was the attack that it them The Germans worked their way gained a footing and held on desperately, but round the lower slopes, and in five hours it could not stay The 1st British Division captured Kemmel village and the crest of (General Strickland) won back the ground the hill The British troops at Wytschaete before night fell and at no other point but held out longer, clinging till after midday this-which was evidently that where victory to the Grand Bois Later in the day the was most desired-did the Germans make. German attack spread north of this to the any impression whatever Ludendorff's front of the 21st Division, where a prema anxieties about the moial of his forces may ture retirement would have left the 9th

in front of Montdidier, and the calm in the Kemmel remained an isolated stroke

completely broke down in front of the 34th, being north of Wulverghem, Eberhardt s 40th, and 17th Divisions, while the 33rd to the south The artillery preparation, of Division and the 1st Australians dealt with a very heavy character, started before dawn, the wing attacks at Meteren and Merris and the assault began shortly after full day The next day was brighter still from the light. Von Eberhardt's Bayarians plunged British standpoint, for on it the last great straight at the Kemmel crest, his left wing attempt, made in response to Ludendorff's pivoting on Bailleul Sieger's division, adjurations to break down the Givenchy- which was in fewer numbers on the right, Pestubert pivot and to find a southward attempted to drive in a wedge between the way out of the salient, entirely failed The French and British at Wytschaete, whence assault was made on a 10 mile front, from the British 4th Division, with troops from

well have taken their birth from this episode Division to be outflanked But though the The French reinforcements were now line was forced back, it went back all tocoming in fast, and were taking over the gether, and finally rested, unbroken, on a sector from Meteren and Wytschaete in line running from Hill 60, near Wytschaete, order to give the tired British divisions behind the Grand Bois, to Voormezeele, an opportunity to recuperate This relief, not far from the canal Here the British however, was not an unmixed blessing. The were able to find touch with the French at Franco-British line was beginning to settle La Clytte The reverse was damping, but down, on the south the German failure at it was not one that the Germans were able Givenchy and Festubert, following on that to convert further to the Franco British dis at Mont Kemmel, had given the impression advantage. A counter attack was organized that the enemy's bolt was shot, and that, as in which French and British troops regained in the Cambiai St Quentin sector, a period Kemmel, and took and kept prisoners. The of quiescence had arrived while a blow was village could not be kept, but the counterbeing prepared elsewhere In fact one blow attack destroyed the prospects of a successwas already maturing in the St Quentin ful renewal of the German effort, and you area, where the French First and Third Eberhardt was quite unable to make further Armies held the curve behind Novon and ground Consequently, the capture of Mont

Lys area was equally deceptive On 25th Nevertheless it was a loss that could be April the Germans began an attack in the ill afforded, because the Ypres salient-with grand manner with o divisions, of which Messines and Kemmel both gone-was over-5 were freshly brought up on the 8 mile looked as much as it had been in the worst front from Bailleul to the Ypres-Commines days, and also because, if the Germans made Canal, part of which was held by British a further advance, to Voormezeele for exdivisions and part by French which had not ample, the British troops and material still in vet consolidated their positions. The Ger- the salient would have to be evacuated in man attack was directed by General Sieger circumstances of great difficulty. The inand General von Eberhardt, Sieger's corps surance against this possibility was effected,

and could only be effected, by a further Germans, for, as at Arres, the British artilnithdrawal and consequently, on the night lery was prepared, the mass formation of 26th-27th April, the line was re drawn crumpled in front of it, and the one wave through Pilkem, Wieltie, Zillebecke Lake, of assault that got through was met with and Voormezeele It was an undestrable the bayonet-perhaps the last German position, and on paper, the Germans were asseult in 1918 to be so repelled nearer to the Channel ports than ever they had been. But they approached no nearer Their one additional effort to do so, on 20th fight was significant of the change that was April, when they set in motion their Iest slowly, but so slowly as to be imperceptible, attack in force on the Franco British front coming over the 1918 campaign. It marked from Dranoutre to Voormezeele, brole the end of the attempts to break the British down as meffectually as that on the southern They had been great attempts, worthy of sector of Givenchy and Testubert eleven the great military mind which had devised days before At one time a decisive success them Ludendorff had left one British seemed to be within their grasp, when they army the Lifth, a si eleton, he had driven reached Locre, and the Scherpenberg sidge back another almost on to its communica behind Kemmel, but the French, who had tions He had taken tens of thousands of smarted severely under the loss of Kemmel, pusoners and hundreds of guns But the were in no mind to lose another vital point. German divisions he had used had suffered They retook both The rest of the attack, even more severely than those he had enmade on the British 21st, 49th, and 25th griged, they were beginning to break in his Divisions, was a very costly business to the hands

The German attack of 20th April was a complete failure, and its end in a bayonet

CHAPTER XV

GERMANY'S OFFENSIVE ON THE WESTERN FRONT, 1918-THE ATTACKS AGAINST THE FRENCH

Marshal Foch assumed official control of British Third Army at Arras, the others 1018 At that time the British armies con sisted of 58 divisions, of which 46 were at tracted to the area attacked by the first great might attack their rear and fianl German thrust towards Amiens the French

the French and British armies on 27th March took the form of attacking the French armies which Toch had sent up to the Oise, and which being in contact with the Germans

The consideration of these attempts dates armies, directed by General Petun, min- from 28th March when the French line was consisted of some 60 divisions, and there Osse at Pont 1 Deque on Mont Renaud. were some quarter of a million Americans thence to Plemont and south of Noyon, mostly distributed east of Champagne The Lassigny and Montdidier Foch at that gap created by you Hutter in the British date considered that by this wall he had lines by the disruption of the Fifth Army narrowed the German avenue within limits was not wide enough to permit the develop that must presently bring their advance to ment of an irresistible German thrust to a standstill Ludendorff therefore attracked wards Amiens and Ludendorff made con this side wall at Plemont (28th), but the tinuous efforts to widen it, so as both to attacks were unsuccessful The French obtain more elbow-room and to avoid (General Humbert, Third Army) retorted counter attacks on his flanks. One such with a counter attack between Lassigny and attempt was the abortive attack on the Montdidier On the 29th and 30th further

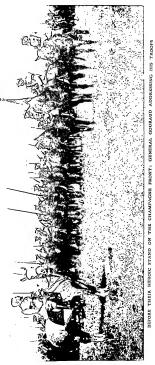
unsuccessful German attacks were made on its left, the Germans collapsed in fatigue bert's touched the right of it

it was a question of marching rather than the end of March the French left flank fighting, and the combined result of the (Debeney) held the road to Amiens, and didier was lost on the 27th and a 10-mile gap to Complegne and Paris left between the French and British General Fayolle, in command of General Foch's that the connection between the French and reserves, sent up reinforcements to help British was cemented. On 4th April his Debeney hold the vital line from Moreuil confidence was tested and endorsed by strong to Montdidier till the First Army could come German attacks, made by new divisions up in force, while 2 divisions from Hum- joined to the old, on the British front from bert's Third Army were sent round to fill the Somme to Hangard, where it dovetailed the gap south-west of Montdidier

The 28th was the anxious day, for the General Humbert, and after a fierce struggle, Germans, alive to the situation, and still with which extended from the right of his line at a chance of getting in between French and Mont Renaud and Plemont to Orvillers, on British, were bringing up 7 divisions to break Debeney's tenuous line, and put what re-Thus General Humbert and his Third Army mained of the British Fifth Army adjoining created a barrier against the German attempt out of action. But the actions fought were to thrust south-east to Compagne Nearer inconclusive, the Germans made some prothe British and Amiens, General Debeney gress to the north, but little to the south, and and the First French Army had the part to on Good Friday (20th March), the day play of similarly barring the German advince selected by the Kaiser for firing the new longfrom Montdidier to Moreuil, across the range gun on Pans, the renewed attack met River Avre, a path which, if pursued as far with a reinforced resistance. The French, as the River Nove, would have cut Amiens together with the British, were pushed back off from the south. Thus the First French to the line of the Avre, but there they stuck Aimy put a patch on the bulge which the with a tenacity worthy of divisions which German advance had created, while the 1em- had fought at Verdun. The 46th Division. nants of the British Fifth Army, with their which was in the hottest fighting since it reinforcements, put patches on it farther arrived with the first of the reinforcements. north and nearer Amiens Debeney had, especially distinguished itself On the 30th to help him, when his own army arrived, again the Germans, who were not lightly to the British 18th Army Corps, which now be baulked of the prize which they had sought formed the left of his line, as General Hum- with such determination, and for which they had sacrificed so much, attacked the whole Debeney's business was to hold the line. Avre line with all the forces they had brought of the Avre, though the first preoccupation up They took Moreuil, but that was the of his divisional leaders was to assist the limit of a success for which they paid heavily British 18th Corps in the protection of and for which a number of their divisions Amiens This double task was rendered showed little stomach. Other attacks, remore difficult both by the extreme German newed on the 21st, shared the same fate, and pressure on the retreating British, whose accomplished no more. The losses were divisions were fighting sometimes indepen- now beginning to add up against the atdent, rather than co-ordinated, rear guard trickers, whose lavish use of divisions was battles, and by the fact that the French army powerless to infuse into those which bore did not, and could not, come up as a whole, the burden of the attack the spirit of the but only in divisions, which were used up shock troops, or the confidence of those in places where advancing German forces who had walked in behind overwhelming rendered their intervention most urgent artillery preparations. The Germans simply The German advance was still being pushed could no longer prosecute here-without a with great skill and energy, especially where fresh start-attacks on a wide front, and by circumstances just outlined was that Mont- the right flank (Humbert) barred the road

By 2nd April General Debeney reported with the French, and on the French front





The Army of Champagne broke the onslaught of the Germans in the last great advance towards the Marne, July, 1915

driven forward at a good many points with loss as possible. The loss was not incon pointedly emphasized that from 27th March Allies jointly held the line near Hangard to 4th April the French First Army was very 10th April is memorable also for the highly tried and thought it ind not to sustrum of lifedal amountement of the part which as the Brush Fifth Army, had done in Americans were taking in the fighting A had given him confidence

began on 21st Murch and by 2nd April of their commander General Pershing had driven the great Somme Ose sthent were used wherever they could be most in the Allied line that line had run beyond useful. Some were brigaded with the the Osse to Barisis (the junction of the British and others went to Debenev's army British and French) and had then been others to Toul and yet others were destined continued by the French Sixth Army through to take part in the great counter stroke the lower Forest of Coucy and beneath the which Foch delivered between Soissons Porest of St Gobain In the revised situa and the Marne-there to write the proud tion the French line as already stated name of Chateau Thierry on their regimental crossed the Oise at Pont I Eveque with colours. The first individual action fought Mont St Renaud as its strongest point north by the Americans was a counter stroke at of the Ose while on the southern bank. Seicheprey north west of Toul (20th April) it ran through Sempigny Pontoise and in which the United States troops after opposite Chauny (north bank) crossing the losing the village won it again. On 30th Ailette to reach its old delimitation. This April in American regiment was in action line was in respect of its Forest of Coues, with the French South Army on the Oise sector difficult to hold and the French were Assne canal prepared to retire from it under compulsion The action of Villers Bretonneuv, a refer This compulsion made its appearance on ence to which must be here interpolated 6th April when you Boehn heavily assaulted took place on 23rd April It marl's more it and captured Chauny on the right of his decisively than any other single event the advance On 7th April the left wing of transference of the weight of the German von Boehn's attack forced the French back offensive from the British to the French to the western bank of the Ailette and on to fronts though the action took place before Germans had blown up in their retreat of After 5th April when Australians re estab the spring of 1917 At Coucy le Chateau lished the British line in front of Villers which was held with great determination. Bretonneux the line from Albert to the severe losses were inflicted on the assaulters punction with the French which for a brief

down to Montdidier and beyond. This of the line the French held there was no nearly made by 14 German divisions and alternative but to retire from it with as little great determination made so little impression siderable and by noth April the new French on either British or French that Debeney position after crossing the Oise run on its issued orders for counter attacks on the southern bank past Querzy to the conflu following day. They were so far successful ence with the River Ailette thence along the that the German advance may be regarded. Osse Assne Canal to Vauvaillon and Amzy as having been stated on the battle field in. On the day preceding this (oth April) a defront of the First French Army while on the termined attacl renewed with new divisions Third Army front the German Comman throughout the day and calling for equally der in Chief was impelled for the present determined resistance on the part of the at any rate to mark time. It cannot be too. British and the French, was made where the

overwhelming attacl it had had to fight body of United States engineers had ren in extemporized positions and formations dered great assistance to the Australians on regainst a resolute enemy whose successes the Somme during the final adjustments of the British line of retirement. Hencefor Before the main German attack which ward American troops at the solicitation

Coucy le Chateau whose historic keep the equilibrium was reached on the Lys front but in view of the unfavourable character space had been held solely by Australian (8th and 18th) and New Zealanders one characteristic American phrase-they had British division going in front of Villers- the power to keep their enemy guessing Bretonneux On 231d April the Germans Marshal Foch might suspect them, for attacked this part of the line with 4 divisions, example, of the intention to exploit their and brought some of their own new Tanks first or second success further, and to renew into action They gained Villers Bretonneux and then the British Tanks took a hand Culais Ludendorff's disappointment with in the game The Germans were stopped. and a night counter attack, made with the troops on the Las, added to his anxiety 4th and 5th Australian divisions, and by the 18th British division, succeeded in surlounding the German troops in Villers-Bretonneus and the adjoining woods. Next, remained too parrow over the shell pitted ! morning part of the 18th Division attacked avenue that you Huticr's army had made for the village, and the net result of the action was the complete expulsion of the Germans with a loss of 1000 prisoners. It was one of the most brilliant of the many Australian successes under General Monash, the Corps Commander, then and thereafter

local actions, often violent, but indecisive, positions, or the Allies endeavoured to tion or its weight diminish German advantages Both sides their war training was far from being com

for while they retained the power of striking des Dames and Rheims to rest! they stood at an advantage, because they

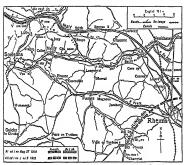
troops, was reinforced by 2 British divisions vantage, which might be represented in a their attempts to reach either Amiens or the fighting-power revealed by the German about Toch's real intention, probably deterred him from pursuing the Calus venture, and, as already indicated, the road to Amiens itself, while the Tiench stood on the Oise and behind Montdidier It became necessary, therefore, to strike at the French on the Oise, both in order to disconcert Foch's plans and to obtain greater freedom for manœuvre Marshal Foch expected the For some time there were nothing but blow to be struck, but though there had been a number of indications that it would at many points of the two salients created fall between Soissons and Rheims, it does on the Somme and on the Lys, where the not appear on a review of the circumstances Germans sought either to improve their that he anticipated either its precise direc

The withdrawal of the Franco-British line were fencing for time. The Germans still had compelled the French, under pressure had some 25 divisions in reserve, the Allies from von Boehn, to accept a less favourable could not be sure, and they certainly would position than that which they had occupied have been wrong had they assumed, that since their conquest of the Chemin-des the German offensive was exhausted, and Dames and their tentative approach through accordingly their tactics had still to be con- the Coucy Forest towards Laon Their ducted on a defensive basis. The defen- line (as in part already indicated) now ran sive attitude was at this time one which behind the Oise, and the Oise-Aisne Canal most favoured the plans of the Allies, because and the Ailette in respect of its western part, the longer they waited the greater and more then in front of the Chemin des Dames, as efficient would be the reinforcement received far as Corbeny, in respect of its centre, and by them from the American troops, which thence on to its right, through Berry-au Bac were now arriving in large numbers, though towards Rheims. This ground was occupied by the Sixth Trench Army, supported by the oth British Corps of 4 divisions-the To the Germans mactivity was, from the 8th, 21st, 25th, 50th, all good fighting units, same point of view, undesirable and foolish, but sent to the front between the Chemin-

The German preparations for attack were could, like the server in a tennis match, get very well concealed, and some of the methods in the first blow and "place" it In other of concealment were appreciated and underwords, they could choose, rather than the stood only when the war was over, for the defenders, when and where to strike-they Germans brought the art of camouflage to had the initiative. They had another ad an intricate perfection unapproached by the

Albes It was one of their ventrible scientific. These masses were set in motion on the weapons and it supplied the element of sur early morning or 27th May after an artillery prise on this occasion for it can hardly I c preputation the brevity of which despite contended that Marshal Foch was not sur its intensity was intended to conceal the prised. The German main attack was made, enemy a intentions. The Germans depended b the arms of you Bookn along a wide front on the secrees of their preparations and their stretching from the confluence of the Aslette numbers both for surprise and success nast the Chemin des Dames to Berry au- Their expectations were justified Wichura's

Bue and her and This attack was made by an corps overran the forward French positions



Map show up the approx. entite por turn of the All ed L no north ν est of Ri cans before tile German Attacl of γ21 May, 1915 and tile post ton of the All ed L no est of Ri c ms on 6th June 1918

army corps, under General Wichura, along on the northern slopes of the Chemin des the Chemin des Dames with 2 other army corps (Generals Winckler and Conta) eche army corps (General Larisch) supporting at An additional army corps (von Schmettow) was better prepared for an attack

Dames Winckler, attacling in depth on a narrow front, tool the Cerny heights and loned with it as far as Corbeny and another aided by Conta's attack this spear head pressed forward towards Hurtebise Firm Wichura's corps, after its initial success covered Berry-au Bac, and found touch with found resistance stiffening against it but the von Below's army on its left On the other, combination of his left with Wincl ler's right the western side of the attack, were 2 other forced a way to Braye en Laonnais whence army corps (Hoffman and Trançois) in the the German attack could spread fanwise neighbourhood of Noyon where it does not along the ridge to the east Farther to the seem presumptuous to imagine that Foch right von Larisch's corps coming up on the right rear of Wichura, tool the high ground

and thus, in a few hours, all that ravined and a photograph, widely published in the clump of hills which forms the western fist German Illustrierte Zeitung, of French of the Chemin-des-Dames, and which the prisoners packed on the road leading to Laon, man hands, and the Chemin-des-Dames was all formation turned The French resisted desperately at points, but along the ridge their third lines confirms the claim. The Germans never had gone, and they had no option but to failed to push a success to the utmost, and retreat down the southern roads and rayines though one may reasonably surmise that the towards the Arsne

tically nothing in front of them-open war- The French gallantly made counter-attacks fare indeed-and by midday had a line in the direction of Luffaux, but these stretching from Laffaux to Chavonne, which were smothered by the German weight of is on the river, and from Chavonne to reinforcements, and all that happened in Berry-au-Bac were liming the river They that sector on 28th May is but the tale were actually across the river at Chayonne, of heroic and futile resistance at the Fort as well as 3 miles farther along, and were de Conde north of the Aisne, and I ismes in practical command of this stretch of the and Braisnes south of it on the Vesle Assne Thus the German centre had suc- The British divisions, having lost severely ceeded beyond all reasonable expectations or on the 28th, could make no effective stand fears On the flanks of the centre the re- on the 20th, and they too were forced back sistance to them was stronger, and longer across the Vesle, being gradually pushed continued, but it was a backward-falling back south-eastwards on their side of the resistance, and Vailly succumbed in spite of its desperately-struggling defenders When that was gone the Aisne was in the grasp of the Germans here, with nothing to hinder them but desperate men in machine-gun posts, so that before the day was over they were not only past the Aisne, but the Aisne-Marne Canal, and on to the River Vesle (which joins the Aisne at an acute angle) at Courcel, at Courcelles, Bazoches and Fismes

It was a deep and tremendous thrust, and there was hardly any redemption of its effects The British troops on the French right, and between the Chemin-des-Dames and Rheims had not been overrun, but they had been compelled, by the continuation of German pressure and the retirement of the French forces on their left, to fall back before you Below to a position facing north-west be-

on the road leading from Laffaux northwards, It was a serious day's work for the Allies, French had conquered so laboriously in the affords ample confirmation of their assertion Battle of Malmason (1917), fell into Ger- that a number of divisions completely lost

Indeed, the progress of events next day first day's results surprised them, they were The Germans poured onwards with prac- ready to improve them by renewed action created salient. The general effect of the German pressure on the 20th was to deepen and broaden the cups, so that by the end of it von Boehn's division could advance over the Vesle on a wide front, though about Soissons, and in front of Rheims, the defensive flanks still held. But it was becoming clear that the Soissons front was shaking, for the Germans were still making progress between the Ailette and the Laffaux road At the other pivot, where the British oth Corps was stationed in the Ardre valley, a reinforcement in the shape of the British 10th Division was rapidly sent up, and here the line was firme: By the morning of the 20th the British stood like the cross bar of the letter A, the legs of which were the River

Vesle and the Assne-Marne Canal The French Commander-in-Chief (Gene ral Petain) had used up all his local reserves. tween the Assne and the Vesle, where they even to working companies, to stop an formed, so to speak, the eastern concavity onrush which in effective rapidity was as of the cup created by the German attack marked as that with which you Hutter had At the other extremity of the line the French overwhelmed Gough's Fifth Army in March, resistance had prevented the Germans from and even the advent of reinforcements from advancing beyond the plateau of Vregny General Reserve, though they slowed the

Germans down, could not stop them. On the 29th the mid-flood rolled on till it reached the low hills which separate the country of the Aisne from the country of the Marne. On the flanks, where the Germans strove to uproot the pivots, they captured Betheny, and the first railway station out from Rheims, while in the valley of the Ardre they fought their way up, pressing back the British as far as Faverolles. On the Soissons side, Soissons itself was captured, important if slight progress was made to the west of it, while east of it Wichura's divisions set foot on the road which leads from Soissons to Château-Thierry. By the night of 29th May Larisch's corps had captured the important Mont de Paris, on the south of Soissons, and the corps of von Hutier and François, coming into play on the right of what had hitherto been the main German attack, came across the Ailette and the Oise-Aisne Canal between Warnecamp and Vauxaillon, and crossed the Oise itself between Warnecamp and Pontoise. The whole French line was being wrenched away from Noyon eastwards, and was hourly sagging lower towards the Marne.

It was to sag still farther. The 2 corps which had come over the Chemin-des-Dames and the Aisne almost without a check reached the Ourcq, and, passing through a line of defence which was full of gaps, or breaking through it where unsupported resistance was offered, got to Oulchy-le-Château, halfway along the road which leads from Soissons to Château-Thierry on the Marne. They now held practically the whole northern half of the main road; and eastwards were at Fere-en-Tardenois, the centre of the rolling, wooded, semi-roadless country between the Aisne and the Marne. Farther east the German left wing had joined hands with the right-wing corps of its army in front of Rheims, and the 2 corps were curling round Rheims, pivoting on their captured points of Betheny and La Neuvillette (the northern suburb of the cathedral city), and aiding Conta's corps in the march southward. Von Boehn's corps, marching fastest on this side of the centre, pressed on through the woods and reached the Marne on the night of 30th May. Here the Germans VOL. VI.

spread along the river from Brasles (2 miles from Château-Thierry), through Jaulgonne, where the road from Fère-en-Tardenois crossed the river, to Vincelles, where it was crossed the river, to Marne up the little curved back from the Marne up the little curved back from the Marne up to tributary Semoigne. It was a 10-mile tributary Semoigne. It was a 10-mile vibration which would easily enable them you coupation which would easily enable them you to cross.

This was, in fact, their high-tide mark, though they actually crossed the Marne and went farther south; for here at last the Allies began to re-act, imperceptibly at first, but with a stiffening tenacity that was to take the heart out of the German triumph. The first symptom came from the appearance of American reinforcements, eager to prove their worth, at Château-Thierry. They took up a position stretched in an arc across the main road, and there, with the French, fought back the Germans. fighting went on for a week, the new southern pivots of Château-Thierry on the west, and the upper valley of the Aisne, where the British 9th Corps acted with the French 5th Corps, holding firm. Inside the curve, now pressed nearly as far south as it was to go, the Germans were here and there brought to a standstill, and in a few places forced back. But while waiting for an increased reinforcement, which was to give them sufficient momentum to cross the Marne with success, they ballooned the salient out westwards beyond the Château-Thierry road towards Veuilly-la-Poterie, south of Oulchyle-Château (the midway point), and towards the forest of Retz in front of Villers-Cot-

Here their advance temporarily paused, and Ludendorff, seeing that it was on altogether too narrow a front—the merest glance at a map will show how deep the pocket was at a map will show how deep the pocket for its width—entered on the second part of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the mouth of the pocket of his plan to open the words, he operated with the that army of von Hutter which stood between Montdidier's and Noyon facing the tween Montdidier's and Noyon facing the tween Montdidier's from which, as we have one of the direction from which, as we have the direction from which, it had actually take place, instead of in the directions over the Chemin des Dames which it had actuated the chemin des Dames which it

way to Paris

ciples, and with the same tactics, as previous troops along the eastern bank, and compelled ones, even to the short intense bombard- them to fall back away from the river, had ment in which gas-shells and the bombs nevertheless one awkward defect. On the from trench-mortars were the chief means Montdidier flank, where, across the open, of offence The infantry, pushed forward rolling country, no infiltration was possible, in rapidly succeeding waves, engaged the but only a frontal attack against a French French line at daylight of 9th June This front between Rubescourt and Courcelles, line ran behind Montdidier (left or west) that had moved very little, and was almost and Rollot, crossed the Matz at Canny, fell ammovable, they had left an unbeaten behind Lassigny, and in front of Plemont, enemy who might fall on the flank of their went on through woods in front of the little newly-created salient. That is what did River Divette to Mont Renaud, and then happen Below Courcelles, where the line crossed the Oise It was best protected, sagged deep, and where von Hutier was by woods and rough country, on the Mont trying to widen it at the bottom, the French Renaud side The ensuing engagement first yielded some ground (at Mery), and more or less reflected these characteristics then, coming back like a string that is again of the line On the Montdidier flank, where stretched taut, retook the village and put up it was highly important to resist pressure, a new fence behind St Maur and Marthe French gave way but little, and on the queglise (the German "farthest south") eastern flank the German progress was also. That was on the night of 10th June, and next slight, the French vigorously counter-at- day they began a counter-attack on a larger tacking, and clinging to the valley of the and less improvised scale, from Rubescourt Divette In the centre the line sagged much to St Maur They had got up some Tanks, more, and the Germans pushed up the Matz and their furious attack was apparently an for nearly 5 miles That was a not incon- unpleasant shock to the Germans, for it residerable gain, though it compared poorly took a mile and a half of ground, captured with those of the last surprise offensive, a thousand prisoners, and left the German and its value was depreciated by the narrow- advance in much the same position as that ness of the front of advance, and the reso- in which the morning of 10th June had lution with which the French wings were found it resisting and reacting

oth June, on a 20-mile front, from Mont- through the wood, and to trickle over todidger to Novon. The attack was cut in wards Bethencourt, while the French line half by the River Matz, which flows in a curv- here was forced to bend back in a loop ing south-easterly way into the Oise above towards the Oise and Ribecourt But a Complegne and the assault was in fact a day which had thus some advantageous thrust for that place-a milestone on the prospects for the Germans-especially as their advance along the western bank of the The assault was made on the same prin- Oise prejudiced the position of the French

Evidently von Hutier's push had en-Von Hutier's evident task was to enlarge countered a different reception, and must the front on which he had pushed back the expect a very different fate, from those of French centre He did this in a way that previous offensives June 11th saw very promised fairly well the next day (10th little change in the situation, and such little June), edging outwards on either side of improvement as the Germans were able to his wedge till he had broadened its cutting effect in it was only gained by great effort edge from some 4 miles to 8 miles in all, On 12th June a diversion was made by von about its centre at Ressons He also did Boehn's army on the other side of the Oise better on the eastern wing For here, (towards the Aisne) and after this day's though the ground was cut up and difficult, intermission von Hutier's troops made one the woods and ravines enabled the German more effort to shift the French western method of infiltration (carried on by large pivot about Courcelles (13th June) They numbers of men) to get into Thiescourt, found the French quite prepared, and the

German efforts were stifled at the outset. forming a line which, if forced by the Ger-Von Hutier's offensive had made a dent, but trees unclear and consequently a failure. it was useless, and consequently a failure which had cost far more than it was worth. It had lost guns and men in the counterattacks. The diversion begun by von Boehn's army just referred to (12th June) was of quite a determined character, and extended on a line from Ambleny along the little tributary which falls into the Aisne just north of the village, and runs previously through Dommièrs, St. Pierre Aigre, and Coeuvres. The possession of this line would have been valuable as a means of getting round the Forest of Retz to Villers-Cotterets. The fighting in and about these villages went on for three days, but one or other of them changed hands more than once, and the Germans could not secure them, being eventually compelled to abandon a movement which was beyond their spending powers. You Hutier's effort had failed, von Boehn's advance to the Marne was an awkward, perhaps a dangerous Ludendorff attempted one more throw in mid-June, and sent forward von Below to a direct assault on the outer investment. entrenched lines, west and east, with which The attack the French defended Rheims. (18th June) was an unredeemed failure; there was no more obvious symptom that, whatever Ludendorff's reserve divisions might be suited for, the stomach for assaults against a determined and unsurprised enemy

There were many signs during the rewas wanting to them. mainder of June that even for defence the Germans were not invulnerable. Americans had a success near Montdidier; there were several remarkable little successes in the Lys salient by English, Scottish, and Australian troops. But the most pointed evidence that the time was approaching when the German forces, suffering from the exhaustion due to their great effort, would be susceptible, perhaps mortally susceptible, to attack was furnished in in the salients which they had forced in the French lines. The first of these was on the line of the small stream running through St. Pierre Aigle, Dommièrs, Coeuvres, Laversine, and Ambleny to the Aisne, and

Forest of Retz to the south of it, but if, on the other hand, forced by the French in a contrary direction, would imperil the upper right flank of you Boehn's army. stream runs through a rayine, and on 29th June the French, delivering a surprise attack on a front of 5 miles, crossed the ravine, and established themselves on the eastern, and better, side of the stream along its midportion, thus creating a position in which, unless the victors were ejected, it would be impossible for the Germans to get past to the forest, and would force them to watch the new French salient very carefully for fresh developments. Farther to the south, little attacks on 1st July tested the German strength just below the Ourcq and near Château-Thierry. In the latter undertaking United States troops took part. Americans were now brigaded at a number of points with their Allies, and on 4th July-Independence Day-Americans and Australians were joined in a very smart action in the Somme area near Morlancourt; and the Tanks which aided them won at last good Throughopinions from the Australians. out the first fortnight of July the Germans, quiescent but preparing yet one more blow that might at the eleventh hour turn the scale in their favour, endured a number of little stabs from those skilful matadors the French, especially on the western side of von Hutier's salient, above the Forest of Retz, and below the Ourcq, as well as on the Montdidier-Noyon salient of von Hutier's

The blow which Ludendorff was preparing may be regarded as a last attempt to make good the advance of you Boehn to the Marne by breaking down one of the pivots on which the salient hung. Von Hutier's attempt on the Oise pivot had failed; it might still be possible to break through the Rheims shoulder, which, in some aspects, was analogous to the Arras and Vimy Ridge front held by the British Third Army, where Ludendorff's effort expired in the great offensive of March. French Head-quarters were well aware that Ludendorff was massing for attack here, for it was the German's on, that the possibilities of surprise became Rheims, was so far cognisant of German inexhausted, and the only question Marshal tentions that he predicted correctly the hour Foch had to answer was whether the attack of the preliminary bombardment. But it would be on a narrow front at Rheims, or was an attack made on a very much greater whether it would spread eastwards on a vast scale. Foch was at the same time maturing extending in all from Château-Thierry, west his own counter-stroke, and, trusting to of Rheims, in a big hump round the town to the correctness of his own divination that Prosnes and Massiges on the east, was 50 Ludendorff meant to strike very hard, with- miles in length, and some 50 German drew the French Divisions from the Lya, divisions were used from first to last, and four more (replaced by British) from Gouraud's army alone had to sustain the the Somme area. As he grew more certain attack of 15 divisions, with 10 in reserve. of Ludendorff's mind he borrowed yet Von Hutier's attack was more distributed, another four British divisions (15th, 34th, 51st, and 62nd) and placed them ready in tion which was characteristic of Ludenthe salient, two on each side, '

The final distribution of the French troops (which it should be remembered were already massing for Foch's counter-stroke), was as follows:-General Mangin and the Tenth Army from the Aisne near Ambleny, through St. Pierre Aigle to the Ourca (2 British divisions with this); General Dégoutte's army from the Ourcq to the Marne (with Americans at Château-Thierry); General de Mitry's Seventh Army along the Marne from Fossoy to Ventreuil; General de Berthelot's Fifth Army in front of the wooded Montagne-de-Rheims (with Italian troops in the line, and 2 British divisions on the Ardre River position), guarding Rheims from the west; and General Gouraud and the Fourth Army defending Rheims from the north and east. Against these were von Boehn's army, very much strengthened for attack and defence, but actually very hard to supply and manœuvre in the deep cup of the Marne salient; and 2 armies, under Generals von Einem and von Mudra, for the attack on the Rheims' northward and eastward defences. The German attack on Rheims extended as far eastwards as the Moronvilliers defences, whose capture by General Anthoine had been one of General outpost line was not intended to stop the Pétain's tactical triumphs in the unlucky attack. It was there merely to break it up, year of 1017.

progressive handicap, as the campaign went aurprise; for General Gouraud, east of scale than that of Arras, for the battle line, and was made with all the careful organizadorff's method, and which the German Head-quarters had been willing to take a month to perfect. The attack, nevertheless, failed, and the true reason for it is to be found in the fact that the Allies were well prepared for it and had evolved a tactical defence to repel the German method of infiltration. The tactical method was, in brief, a defence in widely spaced depth, with a line of forward defensive posts occupied by men who were picked for their fighting ability, and for their readiness to give, or risk, their lives in order to break up the enemy formations. It may be added that the weather was in no way favourable to surprise attacks, but by its fairness exposed the German formations to the full blast of the French artillery-which. in fact, set up its counter battery fire before the German barrage began.

The Germans advancing, not in mass, but by their new method of spaces between files, in which there were a number of successive rows of men, came over and through the outpost lines of General Gouraud's position, and came quickly-so quickly that the German command was deceived as to the resistance to be met with. But the fortified delay it, and notify its advance to the The German attack, which began on 15th divisions in the battle line where the main July, suffered a rebuff comparable in some French works were situated. The outpost of its aspects to that sustained at Arras, line, as a scattered series of defensive posts, though for different reasons. It failed, as thus greatly hampered the German advance that at Arras had done, in its attempt at and distributed the impact of its weight, so



GLNERAL LORD BYNG, G.C.

From a phongraph by Banan



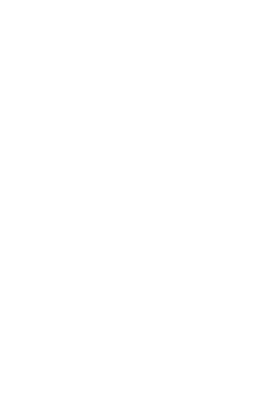
GENERAL SIR H. S. HORNE, K.C.B. Fron a plattgraph by Strains



MAJOR-GEN. SIR A. W. CURRIE, K.C.B.
From a photograph by Ellium & Fry



LIEUT.-GEN. SIR JOHN MONASH, K.C.B. From a phongraph by Ellinn & Fry



that three hours after starting it was still on German salient in an awkward manner the wrong side of the main French defensive positions, and had lost heavily, because the second wave of attack, coming too soon on the heels of the first, had jammed it, offering thereby a target which the French guns did not miss. So evidently was this the case that though the Germans gained a footing by very severe exertions over a section of the road which goes eastward from Rheims above Prunay and Prosnes, and below the Moronvilliers heights, the force of the attack was already spent. The Moronvilliers heights -a valuable pawn-had been ceded.

West of Rheims von Boehn had done better on the side of the sagging salient nearest to Rheims, and at the bottom of the salient where it touched the Marne. The latter was the area of greatest pressure, the Germans attacking de Mitry's army along the winding river from Fossoy to Dormans, in an attempt to cross the river. Although the woods north of the river at the two fronts named gave good cover to the German divisions marshalled for the purpose, the attempt to cross the river was a magnificent piece of organization, when the French readiness to rebut it is taken into consideration. Though bridges thrown over were destroyed by artillery or bombed by the French aviators, and though well-directed counter-attacks (especially one near Château-Thierry) deprived the Germans of a footing at several points where they had won it at the cost of great courage and sacrifice, yet near Dormans they did get over, and stayed there fighting at the end of the day in the villages near the southern river bank. Near Château-Thierry, the Americans threw back the detachments that had crossed to the river edge, and held them there.

The other point of pressure was in front of the Montagne-de-Rheims, the weight of the blow falling between Bouilly and Chatillon. Here some Italian units were fighting with the French, and they fought extremely well. No great impression was made here: the chief German gain was the territory on the south side of the Marne, and the break across the river was not wide enough to be very threatening to the French, while on the other hand it deepened the

for them, because a river 80 yards wide, exposed to French bombing, cut off the head of the wedge from its body. The Germans made very desperate attempts during the night to improve their holding south of the Marne, but succeeded only in driving the French into the protective woods and on to high ground. The deficiency of the gain was manifested next day (16th July) when the French here regained some ground, and by their resistance made it evident that the limits of the German success here had been very nearly approached. On the same day Gouraud's battle positions on the other side of Rheims disclosed a still more patent invulnerability, and threw back all the attempts made to pierce them, or even to reach them between the Vesle and the Suippe.

Another attack was made hereabouts on the following night. The net result by the morning of 17th July was that the Germans had broadened their bridgehead on the south of the Marne, so that it ran in a flat but irregular arc from Fossoy to Montvoisin, about 16 miles reckoned by river length. But this bridgehead was not nearly so valuable as it appeared in the map, because every attempt to enlarge it met with fierce resistance, and while Château-Thierry and the eastern bend of the salient, where Berthelot's army was, still held, the Germans found it very awkward to supply or reinforce their troops. Nothing but their machine-like organization kept them there: and all the time there were unbeaten armies on their flanks. They made, on 17th July, a last attempt to beat one of these armies, namely that of General Berthelot, by an attack on a 6-mile front in the direction of the Montagne-de-Rheims. It was a well-planned and fierce attack, which carried them some distance up the valley of the Ardre, and again brought them into collision with the Italians. But the Italians-picked troopswere quite equal to the emergency, and, with the French, thrust part of the attack back into the valley of the Ardre and held the rest.

The last great German attack thus began to smoulder out in attempts to make local gains. Of all the series of offensives-the Somme, the Lys, the Montdidier-Noyon, ceeding would have been the incapability of 18th July it was to be proven wholly false

and the Chemin des Dames and Aisne, of the enemy, in whose lines the salient had which it was the continuation and conse- been created, to attack on either flank. It quence-it had gained the least Unlike seems undoubted that Ludendorff either the others, it had been thrust forward too thought Foch would be unwilling to strike far and too long to be able to consolidate its back on the flank of the salient, or that he own progress even in a partial way, and could not strike hard enough. The remainbesides taking the risk of thrusting deep ing assumption-that Foch might never be while forces left in being might attack its able to strike at all because Ludendorff's flanks, it had, as a last reckless gamble, last blow would keep him wholly on the added the passage of a river to its own diffi- defensive-was already beginning, on the culties The only excuse for such a pro- 16th-17th of July, to appear doubtful On

CHAPTER XVI

FOCH'S CAMPAIGN OF 1918-FIRST PHASE

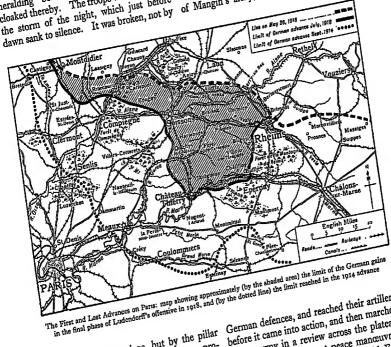
beginning, he was not in supreme command judged that moment to have arrived in mid rises in a series of plateaux towards Soissons effort to knock him out, or at least to put him ways off his balance was being made on the Marne and about Rheims

Marshal Foch, as Generalissimo of the An eye-witness who was near the French Allied forces on the Western Front, had been front in the earlier half of July has described patient, exacting, and single-idead. His the ceaseless stream of men and guns, guiding principle was that the moment for seeming almost to comprise the whole of the the counter-stroke did not arrive till the French armies, which flowed up the roads enemy had exhausted himself by his own to the forest of Villers Cotteret It was efforts In pursuance of this thought he here that the blow was prepared and the men had allowed the forces he commanded to massed, in order to strike at the west face of sustain some perilously severe blows, the the salient into which General von Boehn's severity o which he could not precisely advance had so recklessly plunged between calculate beforehand, and the effects of which the badly roaded country of the Aisne and he could gauge only by faith Such a blow Marne watershed Two French armies was, of course, the first German great effort were assembled, one commanded by General between Cambras and St Quentin, which Mangin, to operate between the Assne and was nearly fatal to the integrity of the Allied the bisecting Ource, from Soissons to forces, but for the effects of which he could Oulchy-le-Chateau, and the other, by not be held entirely to blame, because, at its General Degoutte, aligned from that point to Château-Thierry Mangin's army com-Ludendorff, to the last, commanded the prised some of the finest fighting French weightier and the more precisely organized divisions, as well as 2 of the best British ones machine, a machine perfected by a genera- (34th and 15th) and some of the most eager tion of system and of military thought, and American fighters. The forest sheltered one which could not be put out of gear till their assembly, and in front of them was a the fuel which fed it, namely the numbers slightly undulating country, clear of oband spirit of its soldiers, ran low Foch stacles, and ideal for the use of Tanks It July, when, his preparations having been. South of the Ourcq, where Degoutte's army made, he launched his counter-stroke almost stood, the countryside is much more inat the very moment when the last German tersected by streams, roads, and light rail-

> The battle line of the 2 armies was some 27 miles in length, and its general configura

tion was through Ambleny, Longpont, Troesnes, Bouresches. One piece of good fortune waited on the great counter-stroke. During the night preceding the attack a July thunderstorm shook the forest, and the noise of the assembling Tanks, which were to be the surprise of the assault and to replace the heralding bombardment, was completely cloaked thereby. The troops waited through the storm of the night, which just before

for example, a mile north of the Ourcq, where a wo d was held by German machinegunners according to their best traditions. But the advance could afford to flow round such obstacles, leaving them to be cleared up afterwards, as they were, most effectually; and woods, fortified posts, even the Savières stream which flows sluggishly by the ponds and marées inset on its banks, all failed to hold up the wide and rapid onset of Mangin's army, which crossed the first



any artillery preparations, but by the pillar of fire which preceded the troops as a protecting barrage. Behind it the small, speedy "Whippet" Tanks went forward, with infantrymen hurrying behind their pinions.

The advance of Mangin's division was of unexampled rapidity, surpassing even that British surprise at Cambrai which was its model, and reaping a far greater advantage because of the length on which it was made, and the lesser obstacles with which it had to deal. The Germans were so completely taken by surprise that some of them were captured while cutting the rye crops behind their lines. There were of course isolated foci of resistance—at Chousy,

German defences, and reached their artillery before it came into action, and then marched like an army in a review across the plateau. Villages fell almost as at peace manœuvres. By ten o'clock General Mangin held Fontenoy, on the north bank of the Aisne, and the plateaux of Pernaut, south of it; Vaux and the crest south of Mercin (abutting on the Montagne-de-Paris), Chaudun, Vierzy, Villers-Helon, the wood to the west of Corcy, and Faverolles. The average advance was

South of the Ourcq, General Degoutte's divisions, travelling over some difficult 5 miles. country, had gone forward, not with the same speed, but with assured success, taking Licy, and Torcy and Courchamps. The less speedy character of the advance is shown by the fact that the Germans counter-attacked in the afternoon at Courchamps, but were beaten off. By sundown General Dégoutte's line ran through Marizy, Hautvesnes, and Belleau, and a general advance of 2 miles had been made.

On 19th July General Mangin's movement, which had acquired too great an impetus to be stopped by improvisations, continued, holding fast to its pivot on the Aisne, and bettering its position elsewhere. Near Soissons he made secure his line from Vauxbarin' to Chaudun; his centre went on past Vierzy and Villers-Helon; his right began to move towards Fère-en-Tardenois, and the whole main road from Soissons to Oulchyle-Château was under fire from his guns. South of the Ourcq, Dégoutte's divisions found a footing on the plateau north-west of Mermes, between Dammard and Neuilly St. Front, and the heights north of Cour-Other French forces under de champs. Mitry near the Marne began to push back the Germans, where they had crossed between Fossoy and Oeuilly, and so to peel the Germans away from the river west to east, leaving them no alternative but to denude themselves of the rest of their river holding as best they could. The Germans appreciated the necessity by nightfall, and von Boehn gave orders with a promptness in sharp distinction to his previous imprudence, to recross the Marne. The invaders did so on Friday night and on Saturday morning under the most harassing conditions, for though Foch's areas of greatest pressure were not at the base of the salient, but on the western side of it, and consequently the French divisions on the south of the Marne could not overrun their retreating enemy's heels, nevertheless every temporary bridge, and every road of retreat, was bombed night and day by the French aeroplane squadrons.

By Saturday night, not only was the Marne being abandoned, but the Germans had left Château-Thierry (sacking it before going), and Dégoutte's army, pivoting on it, were in Etrepilly, 3 miles north of it, on Sunday morning, and the line Bézin-Mont St. Pierre by night. At the same time the

French army which General de Mitry commanded, south of the Marne, occupied the double loop of the river between Fossov and Charteves, and thus, in its turn, secured a river pivot for subsequent movement. General Mangin, north of the Ourcq, no longer able to advance with speed, yet steadily pressing back any reinforcements sent to hinder him, drew closer to the Château-Thierry road. He no longer moved as in a procession: the Americans with him had had to fight severely for Vierzy, which had been taken, retaken, and taken again in a struggle in which a resting "shock" division (6th) of Brandenburg troops had taken part. His right wing reached Pilly. on the Ourcq, on Sunday night.

General Foch had not had the men or the opportunity with which to exert a pressure on the eastern side of the Marne salient equivalent to that which Mangin and Dégoutte had applied to its western face. Otherwise the month of July might have ended the war. But when the western movement had established itself, he ordered General Berthelot to exert such pressure as he could. Part of this pressure was exerted in the valley of the Ardre, where the British oth Corps had been operating. The 9th Corps had sustained some very hard battering, and had been in part relieved by an Italian division, which, in its turn, had stood up with commendable decision to the German attacks, and had severely handled one German division (the 123rd). General Foch sent 2 of the fresh British divisions (the 51st and 62nd), borrowed from General Haig, to relieve the Italians. The divisions arrived on the 19th with the expectation of taking part in a defensive action. On the 20th they were sent forward to attack 4 German divisions, the Italian troops opening out to let them through to the assault. The 51st, the Scottish division, found itself up against very strong machinegun positions, but it made its way forward, almost rank to rank with the English division on its right.

Two out of the four opposing German divisions, one of which had already suffered at the hands of the Italians, were withdrawn and replaced. The British divisions took

Foch's Campaign of 1918

St. Euphraise and Bouilly by Monday evening, and pressed forward, fighting for Chamuzy and Bligny, on either side of the Avre. The French on their left worked their way through the Bois de Courton and the Bois

du Roi farther west.

The Germans had to date lost 21,000 prisoners and 450 guns, including the 50 which they had abandoned on the south side of the Marne. But their position, though difficult, was not desperate. They had packed more divisions into the salient than it could hold when under pressure, and they were compelled to thrust in fresh divisions lest the old ones should collapse prematurely, so that nothing but miracles of organization could preserve order in the comings and goings of the 600,000 men they had crowded between the Aisne and the Marne. did rise to the occasion, they did keep their troops supplied, and got them to fight for every foot of the retreat—which began to assume the aspect of a deflating balloon, but never became like one that had been pierced to the point of sudden collapse. The disturbing feature for the moment was that the disadvantages of their position involved them in heavy losses, while those of their attackers were, by comparison, light; the far more deadly peril lay in the fact that the rôles of attacker and attacked had been reversed, and the German High Command, with the knowledge of the failing moral shown in May, could not but be apprehensive of what would happen to troops when in retreat beset by a triumphant enemy.

Foch's hour had struck. He replied to an injudicious blow which Ludendorff aimed at General Gouraud, east of Rheims, by a counter-attack at an altogether new point, namely, between Montdidier and Noyon, where General Debeney's army wrested from General von Hutier the points of Mailly-Raineval and Aubvillers. It was the first note of the Foch method, which struck here and there at points where a blow should do sudden execution, but declined to press any attack beyond the point where it showed a profit, preferring to exchange it for another blow in a less resistant sector. Otherwise Foch was content to ravage the German forces in their confined deflating

salient. That position had now a base of only 30 miles from Soissons to Rheims, and the distances from the midway point of this Fismes, on the Soissons-Rheims roadwas only 18 miles removed from Degoutte's advance guard in front of Château Thierry, and only 15 miles from Mangin's right on the Ourcq, or from de Mitry's left across the Marne. On the other side of the loop the British divisions of Berthelot's army at St. Euphraise were 12 miles from Fismes, towards which all the 4 armies were converging. The French division of Berthelot, verging British left, had got as far as Bas-

lieux. The Germans, as their loop shortened, fought very stubbornly against this converging pressure, but they were in continual danger of finding themselves unable to resist it at particular points, and of being rolled up where they gave way.

Mangin's army was the most active between the 20th and 24th, seizing Plessier-Helleu, on the road junction to Fere-en-Tardenois, and threatening Oulchy-le-Château, while the British divisions (15th and 34th) fought their way forward at Berzy, Parcy-Tigny, and were the heroes of some very stiff fighting about the heights of Buzancy. Degoutte's divisions had less severe opposition to overcome, since the Germans were advisedly retreating in front of him while endeavouring to keep their flanks open, and this army meanwhile got within a mile of the Oulchy-le-Château-Thierry road. De Mitry established himself firmly astride the Marne in the Mont-St. Père-Jaulgoune loop, and Berthelot, whom the Germans were fiercely attacking, lest he should play a similar part to that of Mangin on the other side of the salient, beat off a series of counter-movements in the valley of the Ardre, but could not press in faster. Meanwhile, the Germans were pushing up a fresh army, under von Eben, to support and reinforce their compressed position; and in front of Degoutte and de Mitry fought a series of sacrificial delaying

actions, while they withdrew their guns and

what they could of their supplies. They

retreated slowly but inevitably, and on the

24th Degoutte, taking Nanteuil and Bou-

vardes, at the foot of the large plateau below

now with its road in reach of French guns.

resistance offered to him, Mangin, though goutte's troops had at last got through the still marking time on his left towards forest of Fère, and all day (Sunday 28th) the Soissons, took advantage of a perceptible Allied advance swept convergingly forward weakening in front of his right wing to seize till at night the line of the Oureg was reached Oulehy-le-Château. Dégoutte's army still and seized. Dégoutte's advanced guard had had to pick its way slowly through forest erossed the river and got into Fère-en-Tarcountry infested with machine-guns; but denois. American troops were in Nesles on the Marne a Franco-American attack east of it, and 15 miles farther east Berthespread eastwards from the Jaulgonne loop lot's divisions were approaching Ville-entowards Dormans and through the Forest of Tardenois. It was through this narrowing Riz. The German counter-attack was a gap that you Bochn had to withdraw what he matter of routine; but it was clear that their could of the remnants of the eorps that had hold on the Marne would exist no longer crossed the Marne. than was necessary for their own safety. Their counter-attacks on Berthelot, who had been very properly resisted, with the utmost Pétain, and orders were given to Mangin to force von Boehn could command, were more swing his weight to the Soissons flank and serious, and the British and French had an uphill fight in every sense along the heights sistance was bound in self-defence to be of the little Ardre. All the time, however, most urgent. The 20th was one of the the Germans were flinging divisions into a furnace, and it was proof of this compulsion of Mangin. The Scottish division captured that you Below so far weakened in front of the park and château of Buzancy, maintaining Gouraud on the other side of Rheims that itself there in spite of the untiring efforts of the French were able to retake their fore- the Germans to oust it, and thus threatening most positions in the valley of the Suippe one of the important plateaux in the valley and towards Moronvilliers. On the 26th of the Crise. Farther south, the other Gouraud retook the Main de Massiges.

the Allied line on the right of the salient had fully as desperate. been advanced to Bruyères, Villeneuve, The German front had now lost nearly all

Oulchy, began to push on through the Passy, Cugny, and Chaumuzy, where the 2 forest of Fère towards Fère-en-Tardenois, British divisions with Berthelot, advancing along the Ardre, passed the hotly disputed On 25th October, despite the strenuous village of Marfaux for the last time. Dé-

This situation could evidently take care of itself from the point of view of Foch and centre, where, however, the German rehardest fighting days of the hard bitten army British division exchanging the place of The German attempt to stop Mangin honour with the co-operating French diviby retaking Villemontoire (25th), on the sion who had held it on the 28th, completed Soissons-Oulchy road (about the middle of the capture of Rozoy and Cugny, and conhis line, near the position of the British quered the Butte de Chaulmont. With that contingent), was a failure, and from Ville- plateau went the last strong German bastion montoire to Dormans the salient was now on the west of the Ourcq line, which rapidly becoming so sharp that, south-west of the became untenable, because the French and Ardre, the French guns on either side of it American gunners were able to use the were able to enfilade the German infantry. Butte as an ideal gun-platform to rake all the On the 27th, after a pause for re-arrangement, valleys radiating north and north-east, and the French began to push on a front made the French and American divisions under wider by the fall of Oulchy towards Fère- Dégoutte were now able to emerge from the en-Tardenois, and, unable to maintain their woods and swarm over open country. The southernmost posts longer, the last Germans Americans had eause to remember the valley left the Marne, their departure accelerated of the Ourcq, for Sergy was won and lost by the double flank movement of the French three times before they added it to their along the river from Dormans and from colours, and their capture of Seringes was Reuil. Before that significant occurrence an affair of take and lose, and take again,

its convexity. On 1st August Mangin's army took Cramoiselle and Cramaille and further prejudiced the German retreat, while the opposite side of the salient was becoming difficult and dangerous in the neighbourhood of Ville-en-Tardenois, the eastern jamb of the gates through which the retreat was pressing northwards. Rossigny was cleared of the German garrison, as well as the Meunière wood, and Ville-en-Tardenois threatened with envelopment. On 1st and and August Mangin put the finishing touches to his share of the drive. His northern wing pressed over the Soissons-Château-Thierry road, giving an appearance of premeditated attack on a large scale, while his right wing wheeled forward on a 14-mile front, extending from Hartennes to Coulanges. The English division placed near the base of the wheeling movement took Tigny, and the Scottish on its right fought its way forward east of Beugneux. On 2nd August the feint of the northern wing became a reality, and on this front Mangin delivered his coup-degrâce. The left wing swept suddenly across the valley of the Crise, after picking its way into it, and the right wing climbed on to the southern half of the great low plateau between the Ourcq and the Vesle.

Generals Dégoutte and Berthelot conformed to the tightening loop of Mangin's cordon, and stretched it till the French advance from the south and south-east was level with an east by north line running through Oulchy-le-Château. Hartennes, the scene of the last German stand on the Soissons-Oulchy road, had been captured in the movement of 1st August—a fine piece of work in which the British divisions had a share, and this capture had left Mangin's left wing free for a direct attack on Soissons. General Villemont's brigade of dismounted cavalry, breaking through the German outposts, fell on the main body at Mercin, 2 miles west of the city. The Germans, well supported by their guns, stood their ground steadfastly at first, but the locality had no longer primary strategical importance, for Soissons could not now be regarded as a pivot. The Germans, nevertheless, fought less stubbornly than they might have done, and withdrew from Mercin, fighting a rear-

guard action while their main body evacuated Soissons. General Mangin removed his head-quarters there on the evening of 2nd August. The occurrence signalized the complete abandonment not merely of the German advance to the Marne, but of the German offensive. Ludendorff had withdrawn his forces to the line of the Vesle, having suffered losses amounting to 30,000 men and 500 guns. He had lost time and



Map showing the Relative Positions of the British and French Armies after the Germans had been driven across the Marne back to the Vesle

had lost the initiative, which henceforth remained in the hands of the Allied Commander-in-Chief.

General Foch had endured at least one disappointment, but the success of his first riposte must have confirmed his confidence that his German adversary stood now in the condition when he would be most vulnerable to attack; and attack was the main-spring of Foch's policy. Lord Haig has recorded that the French Commander-in-Chief asked the generals commanding the British, French, and American armies to prepare separate plans for local offensives, each to be taken in hand as soon as possible with certain

definite objectives of a limited nature. In a whole to the Meuse, a feat which Luden other words, every one of the armies under dorff's organization might have accorthe single command was to be kept in a state plished, but which his position in the cyc of preparedness to go forward at a few hours' of the German people would not have sur at any point of his battle line with the greatest and delicate operation, but his nerve fuled

pounded of smaller ones, each of which Trench communications his second stroke consisted of driving back one German army, (which will be the next to be considered in or army group, by the pressure everted detail) was entrusted to the British Comagainst its neighbours. When this army mander-in-Chief, who set in motion the had been pushed out of alignment the salient Third and Fourth British Armies, and the left by its withdrawal was used to outflank Tirst and Third French Armies, in the one or other of the neighbouring armies in salient which had been created by the Gerturn. The proper strategic reply to this mans in March, and which, now that its system of alternating pressures would have purpose was void, was a danger to them been the withdrawal of the German line as instead of an advantage

notice, so that Foch could sound the advance vived. He did in fact attempt this dangerous celerity, and reap thereby all the advantage him, and he laid the blame for its ultimate of surprise When the "limited objective" abandonment on the failure of the German was attained the aimy effecting it would people to support him. But it is more than cease its movement, and another chord would open to doubt whether he could have carried be struck by other forces at another point on his armies even to the line of the Meuse the keyboard Ludendorff would in conse- which would have been their strategic goal quence be compelled to disperse his strate with success. For Foch skilfully drew gical reserves over the whole front, or run Ludendorff's reserves, by the way in which the risk that one of the "limited objectives" he placed his blows, continually farther from should be converted into a break through the German frontier. His first stroke freed The whole strategic manœuvre was com- the Paris-Nancy railway, and improved the

CHAPTER XVII

FOCH'S CAMPAIGN OF 1918-BRITAIN'S RETURN TO THE OFFENSIVE

A distinct task was assigned to General cussion of the German retreat was also felt

Haig The capture of Soissons marked in the greater salient to the north, where, a pause in the movement of General on 4th August, a backward movement began Mangin but the German retreat from the on a 12-mile sector from the British front Marne was not yet ended, and it had re- in the Ancre valley, on both sides of Albert, actions elsewhere The backward momen- and from the French front behind the Avre, tum of the Germans, the forward momen- between Montdidier and Moreuil These tum of the French, left a situation which were German insurances against offensives balanced for a time uncertainly on the from these points. The first of them was line of the Vesle river, uncertainly because a testimony to the value of the continual Fismes had been captured by the Americans, activity which the British troops had disafter a smart action, and the French had played in pushing the Germans back from elsewhere secured bridge heads, not only their advanced positions in front of Amiens, where de Mitry and Degoutte were acting, and had culminated in a brisk and successful but on the other side of Rheims, where attack south of Morlancourt on 29th July Gourand was on the watch The reper- The second was a similar tribute to the





GENERAL VON LUDENDORFF
From an engraving



GENERAL MANGIN
From a photograph



MARSHAL VON HINDENBURG
From a photograph



GENERAL HUMBERT
From a French Official Photograph

of a retreating German army. Debeney's gallantly entering the battle, was greeted by the retreating troops with cries of 'Strike-breakersi' success had been commensurate, and had secured an almost equal advantage of surprise and captures, having regard to the length of front, some 5 miles, on which he was operating. Opposite Rawlinson had been 9 German divisions of the Second German Army under General von Marwitz. Debeney had faced von Hutier's Eighteenth German Army, which made a poor resistance, except at Morisel and Moreuil. When these were gone the Germans lost heart, and the French progress became so rapid that they reached Fresnoy and Plessiers, and linked up with General Humbert on the road to Roye, while farther south the Avre was again passed at Pierrepont. They took 3400 prisoners: so that the captures of the day amounted in all to some 17,000 men and 500 guns, together with an amount of ammunition and stores which compared with that taken in the Marne advance.

This victory and its extent were truly remarkable in an area where, some months before, the British position had seemed desperate. In these intervening months the British armies had been reinforced by some 300,000 men (who had been up till March reserved in England, instead of being put into training in France), and their losses of guns had been more than made good. But that the new drafts should have been able to take their place in victorious armies would seem a miracle, except on the supposition that the old cadres were superlatively good, or that some deterioration had taken place in the German armies meanwhile. Both suppositions are true. General Ludendorff, in his Memories, has complained bitterly of the conduct of his German divisions on 8th August.

"Six or seven German divisions, which had previously been regarded as excellent, were completely shattered. I heard of acts of glorious brayery, but also of incidents which, if I tell the truth, I should never have thought could have happened in the German army. Our men surrendered to isolated cavalrymen, and small sections of Tanks. A division of fresh troops,

They were largely older men, and were not first-class L'Iney were largely older men, and were not first-class fighting troops. Their bayoner strength was much below these figures. It should be added that British Head-step below the possible accessity of evacuating the Channel Powtled for flooding the north-western area of France. flooding the north-western area of France.

and 'Prolongers of the War!' "2

Rawlinson had been held north of the Somme, but on 9th August his attack was continued, and despite an opposition that was long in weakening, Chipilly was won by the evening, and the 3rd Corps was in possession of Morlancourt and the high ground that ran back from it parallel to the Somme. On the south of the river the cavalry seized its long-withheld opportunity: the 1st Cavalry Division (General Mullens), took Meharicourt, the 2nd (General Pitman), and 3rd (General Harmon), harried a retreating enemy. By nightfall the new line ran through Bouchoir, Rouvroy, Maucourt, and reached the western edge of Lihons and Proyart. Debeney's army, by a rapid advance, gained the line Orvillers, Hangest, Pierrepont, on the Avre; and the combined armies were now in a position to strike at

the important German railway junction of Chaulnes. On the 10th General Humbert's Third French Army prolonged the French attacking line. Army, already in touch with Humbert in Debeney's First the previous night, had taken Faverolles, and Assainvilliers, and this made Montdidier untenable by the Germans; but though they had hurriedly retreated here they seemed to have been once more taken by surprise by the new attack of Humbert. This was directed against them on a 10-mile front from Rollot to Elincourt; and in quick succession the villages marking the German line were taken, and another German retreat had been forced upon them for a depth of 5 miles, leaving Humbert's division in possession of the Thiescourt hills, and well

On Humbert's left the First French Army, reducing the foci of resistance at a number of points, aligned itself from Fresnoy-les Roye (which was in rifle-shot of the railway line from Chaulnes to Roye), through Fescamps and behind Conchy, and so came into complete co-ordination with its neighbour's movements. The Germans had now brought up from Cambrai a number of

My Memories, by General Ludendorff, (Hutchinson,, 1919.)

fresh divisions which, "strike-breakers" were energetic enough in resisting the advance of Rawlinson's centre towards Lihons and Chaulnes. The Australians were the first to come into conflict with them, and the fighting was severe till the Canadians, advancing with Tanks on the Australian right, took off some of the pressure, and a reinforcement of artillery subdued the German fire. The Australians gained a footing on the ridge west of Lihons, and beat off a strong German attack. Proyart, north of Lihons, and Meharicourt, south of it, were captured, and from these, as at Lihons, the German counter-attack could not evict the holders, so that by the 11th Lihons was definitely lost to von Marwitz, though he still clung to Roye. The British position on the north of the Somme was improved, and though the bridge at Braye was gone, Rawlinson held the crossing, while the French-British line south of the Somme now threatened the German nodal points at Chaulnes, Roye, and Lassigny. Here the action after three days of triumphant advance was temporarily stayed. The derelict battle area in front of Rawlinson and Debeney was scarred with the old defences, with shellholes, wire, and broken roads, and it offered opportunities for stubborn defence, which the heavily reinforced enemy were evidently prepared to make, judging by the number of counter-attacks they sent forward, especially about Lihons.

Debeney's and Humbert's line was better able to push forward than that of Rawlinson, partly because the Germans were less strongly reinforced in front of them, and partly because the country was more suited to the skilful French tactics of small envelopments. Making continuous progress on 13th, 14th, 15th August the French established themselves at Tilloloy, Ecouvillon, Canny-sur-Matz and Ribecourt-so that Noyon, on the Oise, became, like Roye and Chaulnes, another point which would certainly be reft from the Germans. The advance in a week had relieved Amiens from all danger, and had converted a German threat on the Allies' communications into an actual and growing interference with the

fresh divisions which, "strike-breakers" Germans' railway feeders. Sir Douglas though their comrades might call them, were energetic enough in resisting the advance of Rawlinson's centre towards Lihons and Chaulnes. The Australians were the first to come into conflict with them, and the fighting was severe till the Canadians, advancing with Tanks on the Australian south of the salient between the Somme and the Oise.

While Sir Douglas Haig, therefore, proceeded with his preparations for an attack north of the Somme, where its impact did not seem to be anticipated by Ludendorff, and where a forward movement would facilitate the operations of his Fourth Army, should it be held desirable to renew them, the French First Army resumed its methodical siege operations towards Roye. In these they were helped by the Canadians of Rawlinson's Army, who advanced through Fronsart and Damery, beating off counter-attacks, towards Fresnoy-le-Roye, while the French invested Goyencourt. Humbert's Third French Army carried in succession Fresnieres-le-Hamel (19th August), and Pimprez on the Oise (5 miles from Noyon), Beauvraignes (20th August), and Lassigny (21st August). On Humbert's right Mangin's army had also begun to move forward its left wing and centre (pivoting on Fontenoy, west of Soissons) so as to make ground between the Oise, Ailette, and the Aisne, with the view of ultimately advancing once more to the Forest of St. Gobain.

Ludendorff had by this time become entirely aware that he had expended the resources that would make a successful offensive possible, and that he must husband his reserves in order to weather the storm that was breaking on him. The Allies were gaining in numbers with every fresh accession of American troops: and it was only too clear that his strategic adversary, Foch, was ready to pursue his policy of throwing in every man and every gun into what was left of the campaign of 1918. In Germany the pretence was still maintained that the retirement was strategic-in order to hit back the harder-but retirement was indubitably taking place, and it was manifest not only on the fronts where it was made under compulsion, but on others where the salients



MARSHAL FOCH From a photograph by Densey



created by abortive advances rendered flank attacks on the part of the Allies possible. Thus, on the Lys, the British artillery, continuously augmented, rendered the maintenance of the German advanced positions an obligation to be paid for in a constant drain on the front-line infantry, and on the troops in the exposed and imperfect communications. They had no object in remaining, and General Sixt von Armin began as early as 5th August to effect local withdrawals. On 13th and 14th August British patrols pushed forward here south and east of Vieux Berquin, north of Merville. On the 18th yet another advance was made on a 4-mile front from Vieux Berquin to Bailleul, and was continued on the 19th.

A withdrawal of a yet more premonitory kind took place on the German salient on the Ancre, where General von Below (Seventeenth German Army) began to grow uneasy at the prospect of sustaining a blow while awkwardly placed, and withdrew his forces on the Bapaume front from Serre, Beaumont Hamel, Puisieux, and Bucquoy, towards the shelter of the segment of the Hindenburg line behind him. This withdrawal took place on 13th, 14th August, and went still farther back on 15th August.

These signs that the Germans were no longer unaware of the British Commander's intentions did not discourage him from an attempt which was strategically desirable, because it would turn the enemy line at Péronne and lead the way to the Cambrai-St. Quentin barrier, and was now facilitated tactically by his new position on the Bucquoy plateau south of Arras, and the possibility of making use of the Tanks in a region not yet ruined by shell-fire. The Battle of Bapaume was designed in two stages; the first of which was intended to secure a platform from which the British Third Army (General Byng) could be aligned with the left wing of the Fourth Army in preparation for an assault by the two in combination. The battle which followed was according to plan. Yet another misty morning ushered in the attack of the 4th Corps (General Harper), and 5th Corps (General Haldane), of the Third Army on 21st August. The assault, maintained over a front extending from

Beaucourt-sur-Ancre to Moyenville, was delivered in two pulses, 5 divisions (New Zealand, Guards, 2nd, 37th, 42nd), preceded by a number of Tanks, rushing the front line of the German defences, and 3 other divisions (3rd, 5th, and 63rd) passing through them to continue the advance. Except for the asset which the British possessed in Tanks, the attack was not unlike that of the German model. Like that it drew advantage from the mist to pour in a heavy fire from guns and trench mortars brought close up, to which the enemy artillery could reply only uncertainly because, while the British artillery had its targets ranged, the German gunners could not know precisely where the attacking infantry waves were. Even their machine-guns were not very effective, and the net result of this limited attack was that the British troops reached the line of the Arras-Albert railway on a front of nearly 9 miles, taking (not without some fierce resistance) Achiet-le-Petit on the railway, Courcelles, and Moyenville. The Germans were also pushed from the north bank of the Ancre at Beaucourt. Some 2000 prisoners were made.

There was no preliminary bombardment: and the advance realized a depth between 2 and 3 miles. Early the next morning, after a moonlit night in which a great deal of bombing of the enemy's communications was accomplished, the 3rd Corps (47th, 18th, 12th, and 3rd Australian Divisions) of the Fourth Army undertook another limited advance with the object of bringing up its left level with the Third Army's right. One division (18th), forced the Ancre and enveloped Albert, and the general line was advanced to the east of the road leading from Albert to Braye, on the Somme, while south of the river the divisions were now able to advance in conformity. The Fourth Army's "limited objective" was not expected by von Below, who, in anticipation of a renewed and immediate advance of the Third Army in the Miraumont sector, had hurried reserves there to counter-attack. attacks, very fierce on the railway line and east of it at Achiet-le-Grand, and between Miraumont and Puisieux, did not shake the Third Army from its newly-won positions,

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combined operations the next day. These by no means comprised by the 2000 prisoners were undertaken on a long front from Mer- they lost, and the 18th Division and part of catel (near to the junction of the Drocourt- the 38th (Welsh) Division captured the high Oueant switch-line with the main Hinden- ground east of Albert-again by hard fightburg line), to the British junction with the ing. The 38th Division's task included that French near Lihons. The procedure which of wading the Ancre. In surveying the first had served so well on the preceding day was day's action on the extended front it must again followed-no preliminary bombard- be kept in mind that throughout its length ment: the use of Tanks wherever they could pressure was kept up by thrusts or the threats operate: a heavy barrage in front of Tanks of thrusts, and that while the Germans were and infantry.

The same success followed the procedure, and it is a fact that though at many points the Germans fought very stubbornly-near Albert, and Hamel, north of the Somme, and Chuignolles and Chigues, south of it-and their machine-gun posts could only be beaten down by Tanks, and sometimes not even by them, yet as a whole they fought patchily. and towards the end of the day, ran. North of the Ancre and of Albert the attack (which was opened at different hours and intervals) of the 6th Corps began at 4 o'clock in the morning, took Gomiecourt, and thereafter spreading northwards to where the 4th Corps held the extreme left, the northern divisions swept round to go through the first-line German defences, and to pick up in quick succession Bihucourt, Evivellers, Boyelles, and Boisv Becquerelle, the fortified villages behind it. This cut the main road to Bapaume from Arras, and foreshadowed the movement which was to enclose the former town, while at the same time the historic Somme (1916) was striking. But it was cession. also typical of the evident demoralization Army's advance, though other attacks were made during the day all along the front north of Albert.

South of the Somme the attack began nearly an hour later. Two divisions (Aus-

and the divisions were ready to begin the ing, in which the German casualties were successful in parrying some of them, others got past their guard and inflicted the damage which has been recorded. That the damage had set up demoralization in some areas was made clear next day, when, from the Somme northwards to Neuville St. Vaast the pressure was again applied. The rear-guard garrisons no longer held out with their traditional tenacity; and German reserves were hurried up without any clear apprehension beyond that of filling the gap of the moment. Thiepval, threatened on the 23rd, was abandoned with a mere semblance of resistance to a cleverly-designed concentric attack. in which the 38th (Welsh) Division which. as already mentioned, had waded the Ancre to obtain position, played a prominent part. The cheap purchase of Thiepval would in any case have contrasted strangely with the previous history of its defence: but the testimony which it afforded to the changed quality of the German resistance was emphasized by the flight of the Germans before the divisions of the 5th Corps from all the Thienval Ridge was outflanked. It was de- high ground in its neighbourhood from stined to fall next day, almost without further Ovillers to Mametz Wood. The 38th cost to the Third Army. The contrast to the Division of this corps occupied Pozières, cost of its capture in the first Battle of the Courcelette, and Martinpuich in quick suc-

The whole German front south of Bawhich on this day in 1918 had seized the paume was giving and falling back towards Germans, who in this area of the Third the Bapaume-Péronne road. Next in section Army's attack lost 1000 prisoners. This northwards, Miraumont collapsed after its was the principal locality of the Third three days' resistance, and Pys fell to the same (42nd) Division. The 5th Division cleared Irles, and went side by side with New Zealanders to Loupart Wood. The "limited objective" was on this day becoming an elastic term, for the New Zealanders pressed tralian 1st and 32nd) captured Herleulle, forward with the 37th Division to the out-Chuignolles, and Chigues after severe fight- skirts of Bapaume. Farther north still the

Germans made a much more characteristic from the outskirts of Heudecourt, Bulleeffort to hold the Third Army on the important pivot of their left wing, where the slopes above Bapaume were the outposts of the Drocourt-Quéant switch line. The high ground between Mory and Sapignies was fought for step by step; but there and above them it was the British step that advanced, and you Below's reinforcements were unable to keep St. Leger, Henin-sur-Cojeul, or St. Martin-sur-Cojeul. The Guards, the 52nd, and 56th Divisions, took these places on the 24th, and were prepared to renew the struggle on the following days. It was not, however, till the 27th that Sapignies and Mory were firmly in British hands, and the way cleared for the northward encirclement of Bapaume. On that day also the New Zealanders took the Butte de Warlencourt. south of the town. Trônes Wood followed it after a bitter struggle; and the fate of Bapaume was not sealed till the 29th, when the fall of Beugatre to the north, following on that of Delville Wood to the south, so far encircled it as to leave the Germans no option but to make the best of their way out of it by the road from Bapaume to Cambrai.

The German resistance here had been more determined and the British attacks more persistent, not because Bapaume was at stake, but because, north of it, the impetus of attack was bringing the Third Army up to the greater fortified lines of the German defences. South of the Somme there was a much larger mileage for the British to cover before the lines were reached, and the actions fought were not so crucial. But Braysur-Somme was captured by Australians of Rawlinson's army: there was hard fighting at La Boiselle, and thenceforward the advance began to accelerate on both sides of the Somme towards Péronne. With the fall of Combles (to the 18th Division) the road from Bapaume to Péronne was almost reached. Bapaume fell to the New Zealanders on 29th August, but a more important strategical gain was that of Croisilles on the Sensée river, and within striking distance of the Drocourt-Quéant switchline on the same day.

On the last day but one of August the line of the Third and Fourth British Armies ran

court, Ecoust, and outwards to Vraucourt, Fremiecourt, Bancourt and Combles to Cléry, in the last loop of the river west of Any farther advance of the Péronne. Fourth Army on the Somme would make the German positions south of the river precarious, and this tactical advantage was acknowledged by a German withdrawal both from the British and the French fronts between the Somme and the Oise. The operations of the French armies under Generals Debeney and Humbert are to be considered subsequently: it need only be chronicled at this point that Noyon fell to the French on the same day that the New Zealanders occupied Bapaume. Péronne was quickly to follow, and its swift capture set the seal of brilliance on the established reputation of the Australian shock troops.

It would have been distinctly advantageous to the German plan to have kept Péronne as long as possible, as an obstacle in the combined forward movement of the Allied armies towards the Hindenburg line, and deliberate encirclement, though foreshadowed, would have given them several days in which to withdraw their heaped-up munitions and supplies in the neighbourhood. The defensive feature of Péronne was Mont St. Quentin, which commands the Somme crossings. To its nest of machine-guns the floods had added another obstacle, so that no crossing in front of it was practicable. The 35th Brigade of the Australian and Division (General Rosenthal) answered the difficult question put to it by a night crossing, on improvised bridges, 2 miles farther west at Feuillières. The Australians cleared out the German trenches in front of Cléry, and occupied them in order to launch their own attack on the German positions, not from the south, but from the north-west. The surprise of the manœuvre, added to its daring, reaped its reward, and Mont St. Quentin was taken by assault, not without heroism added to ingenuity, and losses added to both; but its quick reduction saved days of fighting and thousands of casualties. Péronne was added to the Australian colours in consequence: and fell on 1st September. and the Third Army retook all those posi- switch-line upset it Morval, Beaulencourt and Riencourt

Bancourt, Fremicourt, Vauly, and Long- Tortille River But while the Battle of atte Yet farther north a most significant Bapume was still in progress Haig had salient had been established on another old been re transferring the Canadian Corps battlefield, Bullecourt and Heudecourt, and from the Amsens battlefield back to its old following them Riencourt and Cagnicourt front of Arras On 26th August the 2nd were captured by the 17th Corps (General and 3rd Canadian Divisions with the fight-Fergusson) and there the first crevice was any vist (Scottish) had attacked east of Arras. opened on the Drocourt-Queant switch-line and captured Monchy-le-Preux One might venture to vary the metaphor British First Army, communded by General by saying that this was the first nail driven. Home, followed up this preliminary spearinto the coffin of the Hindenburg line thrust by the decisive action that drove the Sir Douglas Haig, in recording it, treats it Germans back clear through the network of as the last act in the Battle of Bapaume, in defences which, perfected by eighteen which 23 divisions of 2 British armies had months' hard work, linked up with the Hindriven 35 German divisions from one side denburg line at Queant. The advance began of the old Somme battlefield to the other, on the morning of and September, with capturing 34,000 men and 270 guns in the an assault in which 6 attacking divisions operations, and establishing a moral ascend- formed its spearhend (1st and 4th Canaancy over the enemy never to be lost The dians, 4th, 52nd, 57th, and 63rd British) shock of Haig's victories, displaying such. The attack on the 26th had been made on a lightning like recovery from the confusion either side of the Scarpe, the Canadians into which Ludendorff imagined that he had taking Monchy and Guemappe, the 51st plunged the British armies, was felt not alone reaching the outskirts of Roeux, and stormby the German soldiery, but by German ing Greenland Hill The success did not Head-quarters As early as 14th August a end there, for Gayrelle, Chensy, and the conference had been held at German Head- Bois du Sart were all cleared before the end quarters, at which the Chancellor and the of the month, and the way opened up for the dorff urged that Germany should come to accompanied by historic deeds of heroism terms, for her situation could never be and endurance, notably in the Cherisy area, improved for the better. It might become for German Head-quarters fully realized worse, but the Allies, faced with the pros- the danger, and had packed their forward pect of driving the German armies from as well as their rearward defences. On 1st their fortified lines, might yet be inclined September the 6 divisions, preceded by 40 to come to terms It was only the prospect Tanks, advanced to storm a 5 mile position of so suddenly acquainting Germany with in which no fewer than 11 German divisions,

This was a feat of individual ment which the news that a "German Peace" was a from its circumstances must be singled out chimera, which prevented this plan from but the no less remarkable fact was the being adopted Ludendorff had, therefore, incessant energy with which the Fourth to fall back on an economical defensive and Third Armies continued to attack policy, and his method of attempting On the eve and day of the attack on Peronne economy was to withdraw slowly to the a divisions on the Fourth Army's left wing Hindenburg line. The method failed be (3rd Australian, 58th, 18th, and 47th) took cause Haig divined the German plan, and Bouchasvesnes, Bancourt, and Fregicourt, by striking towards the Diocourt-Queant

tions which in the first battle of the Somme The crevice in the Drocourt-Ougant line had taxed the diminishing energies both has been spoken of as a new turning point of Haig's and Petun's commands, namely So it proved. The Germans still held as Sailly-Saillisel and its heights, as well as outposts to their main fortified defence lines the high ground about Rocquigny and This placed them on the ridges east of Beugny, as well as the defensible line of the

Kaiser were present, and at which Luden- vital movements to follow. It was a feat

distributed in depth, manned the intricate It was the beginning of the end. It followed defences. The Canadian division, with so quickly on the Battles of Amiens and English battalions on its left flank, attacked on either side of the Arras-Cambrai road, and behind the infantry came a swift-moving force, motor machine-guns, armoured cars, Bapaume that Ludendorff, with his right and cavalry. This steel-faced batteringflank threatened, had no option but to call ram went through the successive lines of the back von Boehn's divisions with all possible Drocourt-Queant line in two hours-more speed to the shelter of the main Hindenburg than a thousand yards an hour—and reached defences. The battle had been a spectacu-Dury and Cagnicourt, fighting among the lar success, for it had captured 16,000 priruins. In seven hours the whole of the soners and 200 guns, but its more important Drocourt-Quéant line there was pierced and strategic results were immediately apparent. held. On the Canadians' right, the Low-By 9th September Ludendorff's strategic landers, Naval Brigades, and West Lancaretir(ment, "according to plan", was a shires of the 17th Corps (General Fergushasty retreat with little plan that would be son) had gone forward as valiantly and irrepermanently valuable. Whereas his own swift sistibly to the conquest of the triangle where retreat in 1917 had deranged the schemes of the switch-line was coupled with the main Nivelle, the retreat under compulsion had Hindenburg line; and, in a little over the covered Ludendorff with the confusion of seven hours which the left wing had occuits consequences. Between 21st August pied, the triangle area was also won. The and 9th September some 470 guns and German opposition stiffened; their counter-53,000 prisoners had been wrenched from attacks were sent in; but they neither him; the French had been able to occupy repelled nor hindered. The Canadians Ham and Chauny, and draw within sight of stayed triumphant on the Dury Ridge: the La Fère, while behind the fortress lines, on 63rd Division, on the right, reached the railthe holding of which no high hopes could way east of Queant, and the West Lancabe placed, he awaited with apprehension the shires, coming through with their reserve next blow of his adversaries. battalion, overlapped the village on the It remains to add that Haig's victories

By midnight Queant was gone, and the linch-pin of the German northern fortified lines had been removed. This, the Battle American divisions working with these had of the Scarpe, was more than a turning point. passed beyond Kemmel Hill.

had the effect of hastening the German withdrawal from the Lys salient, as Ludendorff became harder pressed for troops with which to fill out his skeleton battalions, and by 6th September Bailleul, Merville, and Neuve Chapelle were regained by the British. The

CHAPTER XVIII

FOCH'S CAMPAIGN OF 1918—THE EXHAUSTION BY THE FRENCH OF LUDENDORFF'S RESERVES

General Foch, while still a lecturer, had became more evident as one knock-out blow always insisted as the cardinal principle of after another failed; and the reason why it War that before attempting to bring the had been neglected was because no one had enemy to his knees it was necessary to allow learned to apply it to trench warfare. Foch

him or compel him to exhaust his own redivined the secret, and the "limited objection." Sources. That principle had never before tive", which had been a French doctrine been put into operation by any general before the great failure of 1917 first interon the Western Front, though its necessity rupted its operations, and then postponed

not know how long the wearing effect of is what happened them

changed fights for bridgeheads with them (Thiescourt) massif for three weeks The position was ex-

its triumph, was part of his plan. He did the two northerly-advancing fronts. This

these" limited objectives" would take before General Humbert's first movements did he could supersede them by the knock-out not disclose the intention to add another to blow that every general aspired to deliver, Foch's body blows All he was asked to but he was certain that the Germans must, do was to reach the road from Montdidicr after their own exhausting effort, begin to to Compicene, between Rollot and Civilly, stagger under a succession of punches The and to take a step forward averaging a miles first punch had been the Marne sahent, the over his whole front, though he would go second had been Haig's action on the Somme farther if he could Ludendorff, still hoping salient aided by those which Debeney and to withdraw deliberately, had anticipated Humbert were able to inflict at the same some such advance by beginning to withtime. One more punch was necessary and draw his troops on the night of oth August then the opening for the knock-out blow from some of their forward positions might present itself. We must first con- Nevertheless, Humbert's attack was not exsider these preliminary tactics so far as the pected by them so soon, and here again French and American forces took part in Ludendorff encountered a "regrettable incident", for Humbert, attacking at dawn On 3rd August General Mangin had of the 10th with a few Tanks, and without secured Soissons and occupied the Aisne a preliminary bombardment, threw his down to Venizel, while the American divi- infantry into the enemy's first lines, while sion with General Degoutte's army pressed the Germans were still waiting for the attack on to Fismes, on the Vesle, with British and to begin Compiegne, Ressons, and Chevin-French divisions coming up on their right court were reached not in a day but in an to Branscourt and Champigny The next hour, and, elated by success, the French day the Americans were over the Vesle, added 4 miles more to the original 3 in the which was in flood at various points, but direction of Roye, which was on their right. the Germans had by no means made up their and in the difficult ground in front of their minds to retreat to the Aisne, and besides left were a mile beyond the points they had setting counter-attacks in motion began to hoped to reach. This enlargement of the dig themselves in on the Vesle heights 'Third Army's success enabled Foch with General Foch thereupon, acting on his swift decision to alter the original plan to theory of limited objectives, handed the one productive of more damaging results service over to Haig, who proceeded to Instead of plodding on towards Roye, where punch the Germans vigorously during the he would find stiffening resistance. General rest of August, while the American divisions. Humbert wheeled to his right so as to face facing the Prussian Guards and other ex- eastwards and to direct his attack towards cellent German divisions on the Vesle, ex- the tumble of hills known as the Lassigny

This was a serious undertaking, but the tremely embarrassing for Ludendorff, who capture of the massif would facilitate the dared not let go on the Vesle, but who saw work of Debeney and Rawlinson, and would his reserves being drawn from other parts of take from the Germans all the fruits of the the line, as well as from general reserve, advance they had made in June while ento meet the blows of Haig Debeney co- larging the Somme sahent to the south-east operated with Rawlinson in the British The massif was, however, not to be conoffensive, and when, on the third day of it, quered lightly, its wooded heights and he had pushed forward his right towards ravines were admirably designed to favour Montdidier, Humbert set his neighbouring a German retarding action through their most army in motion, marching towards Roye with effective weapons the machine-guns. The the idea that Montdidier and a number of heights of the massif stretch eastwards for German soldiers would be nipped between 8 miles from Ressons, on the little Matz,

to the Divette. Both rivers are tributaries of the Oise, and between them spurs and ravines jut out like fronds of a fern, the spine of which runs through the Bois de Thiescourt. But once this wooded range was dominated the whole ridge from Plemont, near Lassigny, to Mont Renaud, near Noyon, was turned. Humbert's army made a good start on the 11th, going 2 miles in the new direction, and from that date it forced its way onward, never by any sensational advance, for that was no longer possible while Ludendorff could spare machinegunners to hold on, but by pushing round one strong position after another, and then utilising the sharp salients thus formed for repeating the process farther on. By the 15th the highest point of the massif was captured; but the steady scientific pincers were kept to their difficult and dangerous task till 21st August. Before that they had done all that was required. Junction had been made with Debeney's army near Canny; and on the 18th General Foch had put his foot on another pedal and sent Mangin's army into action in another direction.

General Mangin advanced against the Germans in the angle which the Aisne makes with the Oise, and his movement, apart from its value in perplexing Ludendorff as to where to distribute his reinforcements, may be viewed as co-operating with that of Humbert, though acting on a parallel instead of a convergent line. He advanced north-eastwards between Carlepont and Fontenoy on a front of 9 miles; and in two days had captured the Nampcel plateau. Then, on 20th August, he came forward with the second section of his army, thus extending his front from 9 miles to 16, and taking it westwards to Bailly on the Oise. This second half of his movement, which taken as a whole was a most ingenious piece of work-since his first operations had offered no hint of it—gave him a footing on the plateau north of Vaissens and took his left wing to the outskirts of Carlepont and Caisnes. He was now on the road across the Oise to Noyon, 5 miles distant. On the morning of the 21st (when far to the north Byng was occupying all the energies of von Boehn), Mangin's left continued to

edge farther along the Oise, forcing the Germans from their strong position in the forest of Carlepont to a precarious pocket between the river and the main road. While they were considering the problem of withdrawal, their bridges across the Oise were being bombed by French airmen, and Mangin's left was steadily creeping to Bretigny, 5 miles by river from Noyon, while his right reached Quincy, on the Oise-Aisne Canal. His progress had been the signal to Humbert, whose advance, now freed from the threat to its right flank, was facilitated, and could be made on either side of the massif, the whole of which was held by the 22nd, together with the low ground beyond it to the Divette. Mont Renaud, the guardian hill of Noyon, was only 3 miles away. He took breath for his last push, and then at a bound captured the German positions on the reverse slopes of the massif, at the same time thrusting forward his right over the Oise lowlands to Pont l'Evêque, just below Mont Renaud and Noyon. On the 28th Noyon's fall was assured. It was encircled on the 29th. The armies both of Mangin and Debeney had co-operated with that of Humbert to make its fall a certainty, and to reap further advantages from it.

Mangin, on the night of 22nd August, holding the southern bank of the Oise as far as Sempigny and that of the Ailette to a point about opposite Coucy-le-Château, continued to press forward across the Ailette. He was now engaged with Debeney (opposite Roye, on which the French First Army was moving), and Humbert, in drawing a loop round Roye and Noyon. The Germans counter-attacked Debeney at the Roye end of the loop but could neither keep him back nor prevent him from coming forward, which he did on the heels of their counterattack (August 26th-27th), making an irregular advance of about 12 miles on either side of Roye. Roye fell like a ripe pear, and Chaulnes followed. Ludendorff's plans of deliberate retreat were therefore spoilt at this end of the great Somme-Oise salient also: he simply could not afford the divisions with which to counter-attack, and to save the huge stores and ammunition dumps collected in this area. He had to sacrifice

these instead of men, and to get back in such him back brought up 12 new, but by no Nesle and Noyon.

as already mentioned, was encircled on the Germans at any rate may claim the credit that they did not go without fighting, and for some time they clung to Mont St. Simeon, the height commanding the road from Noyon to Ham. That, however, became untenable when Debeney's army, crossing the Canal du Nord on 1st September, wheeled eastwards on a front which would bring them both to Ham and to Guiscard, and would consequently threaten the Germans' best road of retreat from Mont St. Simeon and Novon. Debeney established close liaison with Humbert, and his army did the marching while that of his colleague resumed its patient, difficult work of driving back the Germans from pivoted positions which they had perforce to defend by sacrificing rear-guards. Debeney crossed the double obstacle of the Somme and its canal at Epancourt with his left wing on 4th massif, which was the key to Laon.

haste that, almost as if in an unopposed means fresh, divisions. The German diviadvance, the First French Army of Debeney sions had now fallen much below strength, came right up to the Canal du Nord between and the usage they suffered in front of Mangin, where they could not be employed From Novon and Nesle two highways run in the most scientific, or least costly, manner, north and east to Ham, and a third from still further reduced them. Mangin all the Novon to Chauny in the Oise valley. The time was steadily bringing round his left first two of these roads came under the guns closer to the Forest of St. Gobain, and creepof Debeney and Humbert; the third under ing up its plateaux on the right. General those of Mangin, while the aeroplanes Foch now called up General Dégoutte's attacked the German communications on Sixth Army to emphasize Mangin's threat, all three. The enemy had no choice but Mangin had crossed the Ailette on 20th withdrawal from the narrowing Nesle- August. Dégoutte and some picked Ameri-Noyon-Chauny salient, and Mangin, who can divisions began to exert pressure to help had gained touch with Humbert at Pont Mangin's right north of Soissons. In the l'Evêque, was adding further reasons for first week of September the position of the the German withdrawal. Novon, which, French armies of the centre was as follows:-(1) Debeney had crossed the Somme on a 28th, fell to one of his best divisions. The 6-mile front between Epancourt and Offay, and on a front north-west of Ham pointed towards St. Quentin; (2), Humbert, southeast of Ham, was past the group of hills which separate Novon from Chauny, close to Tergnier, and was looking forward to La Fère; (3), Mangin's left wing was back again in Coucy-le-Château, and beyond, and his right held the road and railway thence to Soissons: (4), Dégoutte was spreading both northwards from Soissons and eastward along the Aisne.

In the strategic sense Debency and Humbert were converging on St. Quentin and Mangin and Dégoutte on Laon. Each army was about 12 miles from its objective. Mangin, on the Vauxaillon plateau, being nearest to Laon. A point of great value was that their presence - all alive and all moving - kept Ludendorff in uncertainty as to the quarter from which the next attack would come. September, thus taking the first step of his He already had his hands full with the journey from Nesle to Ham, while Humbert attacks of the British armies under Rawbegan his march on Chauny next day. When linson, Byng, and Horne, and was certain there, Humbert would be in a position to that another attack from the first of these assist Mangin in the attack on the St. Gobain was imminent. He had to draw reinforcements from somewhere, and decided to Mangin, who for the time being had done obtain them by shortening his front on the his share of the work in harassing the Ger- Vesle, where de Mitry, with French and mans and reducing their strength, was more American divisions, had been facing the or less stationary on the Ailette. But Luden- Seventh and Ninth Armies. The orders to dorff could not afford to leave so dangerous the German armies to retire to the Aisne had an intruder unwatched, and in order to hold been given on 4th September, and by 5th

September both the German (on a 10-mile front of retirement), and the Franco-American forces were on the move. The retirement was not unmolested or inexpensive. The Americans, on the immediate right of Mangin, crossed the high ground to the north of the Vesle and occupied the Aisne from Condé to Viel-Arcy.

Two days later Mangin crowned his work by capturing the ruined Fort de Condé, which had been a goal in the Battle of Malmaison a year before, and stands on the plateau dominating the western end of the Chemin des Dames. reached the same day, and the French climbed once more the western slopes of Vauxaillon was the Laffaux plateau, in circumstances vastly changed from those which had accompanied the tragedy of the first day's attack of Mangin's army the year before. The Germans were in very different conditions for resistance in 1918; their counter-attacks, that had been so damaging in the first assault on the Chemin des Dames, crumpled before the renewed onslaughts with which Mangin's divisions met them. On 14th September this commander retook Allemant and Lassaux Mill, and, planted immovably on those historic heights, occupied also the Montdes-Singes (16th), which overlooks the railway to Laon through the Vauxaillon defile. Once again the towers of Laon came into Mangin's advance, which had directed its main effort eastwards instead of north-westwards, had been seconded by parallel advances on the part of the armies of Humbert and Debeney, who maintained a fighting line from Péronne to Noyon, and whose incessant menace, coupled with that of Mangin's movement, prevented the diversion of Ludendorff's reserves to a point farther north, where, in the second week of September they were badly needed to hold up another British drive at Epehy. By Joth September Humbert's Third Army, after taking the fort of Liez, reached the line Travecy-Henancourt-Contescourt; and Debeney's First Army had captured Roupy and Etreillers. There were two more pushes to come, exclusive of the comparatively lightly opposed one by which the American divisions followed up the retreat of the

German Seventh and Ninth Armies to the Aisne. One of these was a British one, the 217 other an American one, in which the United States divisions first acted together as an

The British movement is known as the Battle of Epéhy; and it was the preliminary both to the great attack on the Hindenburg line on which Sir Douglas Haig staked his reputation as a commander, about which he perhaps cared little, and the future of the British share of the campaign, about which he cared a great deal. The British advance, viewed as one movement, was towards Cambrai, which was the northern bastion of the German defences, as La Fère and Laon were the twin bastions to the south. Sir Douglas Haig's masterly approach to the German principal defence here began at Hayrincourt, where the Canal du Nord, the advance moat of Cambrai, turns to the north. Above Havrincourt the approaches were unpracticably difficult—long glacis slopes swept and commanded by every sort of gun. South of Havrincourt they went away from the canal at an angle, running south-eastwards over ridges till they reached the second moat, the Scheldt Canal at Bantouzelle. Thence the fortified lines ran in front of the canal to St. Quentin. On 2nd September the Third Army (4th and 6th Corps) began what seemed a local attack without ulterior significance on a 5-mile front. Four divisions were employed (37th, 62nd, 2nd, and New Zealanders), and the first two of these took Havrincourt and Trescault, the jumping-off places for the movement to follow. Much lower down the British line, where it joined Debeney's First Army, the 9th Corps and the Australians continued to skirmish skilfully forward till they had captured Maissemy, where Gough's army had been forced back in the March offensive: and approached those other places of tragic memory, Le Vergnier and Templeux-le-Gerard. This had all been done by 17th September, and in the intervals Ludendorff had found himself struck before he was ready in the St. Mihiel salient by the Americans, an operation presently to be described. Sir Douglas Haig, having thus manœuvred for position, began without waiting a moment

the last of the preliminary movements which had to fight for every shell-hole and trench was to bring him to the gates of the Hinden- and dug-out they conquered. But at nightburg fortress. On the 18th in heavy rain fall the last spark of German resistance at the Third and Fourth Armies went forward Epchy had been quenched, and by noon together on a 17-mile front, extending from of next day the important positions at Gouzeaucourt below Havrincourt, the pivot, Gricourt-important because otherwise they to Holnon Wood, where the French First would have been in the way of Sir Douglas Army lent a hand. They gained a victory Haig's greater plan-were cleared up on the which was only less than surprising because right. The general results of all these pre-



nately the Allied Line before and after the Frup showing approximately the Allie merican agrack in September 1918

100 guns. The hardest fighting was on the in 1914. extreme right towards the French and St. Quentin, and at the left centre about Epehy, German advance in 1914 when, in attempting where the 6th, 12th, 18th, and 58th Divisions to come through south of Verdun; they had

of the greater one which was to follow; and liminaries had been to bring the British front it was typical alike of the waning courage of up to striking distance of the Hindenburg the Germans and the waxing confidence line. The French also were back in the of the British armies, both in their ability to positions on which they had stood at the fight and in the machinery of their organiza- beginning of Ludendorff's 1918 campaign, tion. Fifteen British divisions went through and in one sector-the long quiescent one 3 miles of organized defences, beating 20 of St. Mihiel-the Allies stood farther north. German divisions who could not stop them, and the Germans farther back, than they and taking from them 12,000 prisoners and had done since the first months of the war

The St. Mihiel salient was a part of the

gained possession of part of the heights of to believe in the efficiency of these units the Meuse down to St. Miniel and the Roman Camp fort by the cita of the river as a whole, and affected to regard them Roman Camp fort by the side of the river.

As a white, and attended to Account the river.

The side of the river. General Joffre had tried to drive the Germans from their wedge-like salient in 1915, and the struggles at Les Eparges on the western face, and Apremont on the southern, were bloody, and only successful in the sense that they prevented any considerable advantage to the enemy from accruing in consequence of his threatening position. The salient became a kind of No Man's Land, which one side could not cross and the other could not leave; and no operations were based on its possession, though had the struggle for Verdun ended differently it would have worn a different complexion. Ludendorff rightly declared that its abandonment had been more than once under consideration. It may have been in 1916-17, and certainly was in 1918, when German Head-quarters were casting everywhere for men. It was held by 7 German divisions and 2 Austro-Hungarian in September,

1918, the latter being part of the reinforcements which Ludendorff had been glad to accept from the partner whom, in his Memories, he likened to a corpse to which the strong and vital German was tied by alliance. Some of the German divisions were by no means first-class: but Ludendorff, relying on the natural strength of a position which had so long defied the efforts of the French, as well as on the superior observation posts which enabled the Germans to overlook the preparations of their opponents, had thought them quite sufficient with which to hold the salient or to withdraw deliberately from it when he gave the word.

Some of the heavy artillery had already been withdrawn late in August or early in September, but the attack which the Americans made under General Pershing caught General Fuchs, Ludendorff's local commander, unawares. American divisions which had been tried in other areas of conflict had been quietly concentrated south - east of Verdun so as to form the First American Army, and this concentration was known to the Germans, though its strength and purpose remained obscure. Almost to the end the German Head-quarters Staff refused

and British could use as stop-gaps in quiet sectors from which more experienced troops could be transported. The American army on 12th September was principally concentrated along a 10-mile front, extending from Xivray (west) to Fey-en-Haye (east), by the Forest of Apremont, where it linked up with the French. Two French divisions on the American army's left were curved round the fortified Roman Camp, and on the western face of the salient French and American troops together held the line of the heights of the Meuse from Les Eparges down to Spada, and thence across the Meuse to Chauvancourt, where the Germans held a bridge-head on the western side of the Meuse, The 2 Austro-Hungarian divisions were on the western face of the salient between Combres and Spada.

The fight began with a heavy bombardment necessitated by the strongly fortified character of the defences, and then the young American army, preceded by Tanks, was loosed on the southern face. This attack was made by 2 corps, of 7 divisions in all, on the southern face, and simultaneously another 2 divisions, attacking on the western face, drove in eastwards towards the southern attack. The German divisions were, as we have said, not first-class, and they may have known of the intention to remove them from the salient, but on the whole they put up a poor resistance, and in thirty hours the two American forces had joined hands. Their chief enemy was the mud. At one point near Seicheprez, where the Americans had fought the Germans fiercely in previous encounters, the work of the German machine-gunners had a reminiscent quality, but the Tanks cleared the nests out, and at seven o'clock in the morning the Seicheprez Ridge was passed and the line rolled forward in open warfare. This southern advance went on little checked till six in the evening, when the Americans had reached Thiaucourt and laid hands on the light railway. The French divisions, curving round the nose of the salient, had meanwhile advanced to protect the Amerihad got forward, passing the Forest of Apré- German armies supplied through the north mont and outflanking St. Mihiel.

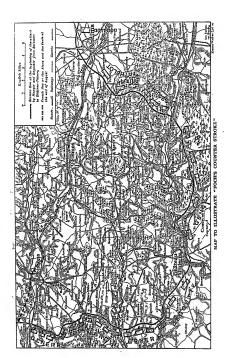
started three hours later, and was conducted by I French division and 2 American (the American forces were concentrated for this American division was larger than either German, French, or British at this stage of tween the Argonne and Verdun, not between the war), attacking from Les Eparges to Verdun and Metz, Seuzy. Their task was harder, and the despised Austro-Hungarians fought well series of operations by which Foch had conabout Combres, where the wooded hills templated the exhaustion of Ludendorff's sheltered the machine-guns. But early in effectives. These effectives had reached the afternoon the defenders had been ham- their greatest strength in 1018 after the mered or manœuvred out of their positions, Somme-Oise battle, and before the surprise and the pincers began to close in according of the Chemin des Dames, when they to plan. The German divisions did not amounted to 207 divisions, of which 60 were attempt to retreat in the orthodox manner in reserve. In the third week of September, of fighting rear-guards, but broke into 1918, they had fallen to 181, the balance of small parties, though they made a great 22 having been eaten up in supplying the effort to get out their guns by way of losses of those that remained; and the reserve Vigneulles before the bottle-neck of their divisions had fallen to 21. This weakenretreat was closed. The neck would have ing was due not only to Foch's methods. been closed earlier but for the resistance or to the very severe losses which Haig's of the Austro-Hungarian divisions between armies had inflicted, but to the fact that Combres and Spada. By eight o'clock every effort of Ludendorff had been pushed next morning the salient was gone. The beyond those profitable limits after which Germans had left in its 150 square miles a battle degenerates into hard slogging with some 10,000 prisoners and 440 guns.

means limited to this. The restoration of in which Germany had for three years been direct communication between Verdun and drawing on her recruit classes in advance was Commercy facilitated along the Meuse beginning to tell its tale. bold and vast as it was, narrowed its concentrated effort to destroying the German numbers.

can flank and pin the enemy. They, too, centre, with the intention of dividing the from those of the eastern frontier, and after-The western, or north-western attack had wards, if an afterwards should be necessary. of rolling up the eastern section. The main purpose, after the St. Mihiel victory, be-

General Pershing's victory completed the losses on both sides, probably greater among The results of the victory were by no the attackers. Moreover, at last, the way

valley railway the French supply system; Germany had no more young men coming and a new light had been thrown on the on; only boys and old men. At the same ability of the Americans, who at St. Mihiel time the Allied strength had been going up, had revealed excellent staff work and tacti- mainly by the American reinforcements, cal leading, in addition to their admitted which now numbered 25 large divisions eagerness to fight. Moreover, now that ready for service (as the Americans say), the salient was gone, a new threat was with more to come; and the British army, apparent to the German fortress of Metz, despite its losses, had now, thanks to reinas well as to the iron-fields of Briev. The forcements from home and overseas, 57 apprehension which Ludendorff may have divisions instead of the 53 of July. The felt was encouraged by the Allied Intelli- American division was a unit double the size gence Department, and the rumour spread, of those of the Allies or of the Germans. It is certain that the Germans, almost to Still more discrepant was the supply of guns the end of hostilities, kept a watching force and shells. The Allies had all they wanted on the front here in apprehension of an and more!; the Germans had lost 2000 American attack east of the Meuse. This guns and mountains of ammunition which was, in fact, no part of Foch's plan which, they could ill afford, and both in power and





quality the German urtillery arm v as falling of the greatest recoveries in history, was I ist of all the tide of feeling had changed cer ain of vie or the Americans were eager German moral was not what it was, as the emissiders in its pursuit. The "Impondercast surrenders told from time to time ables' as well as the material advantages, The French were filled with a new hope were all on the side of the Allies and rejoicing the British army, after one

CHAPTER XIX

FOCH'S CAMPAIGN OF 1918-THE HINDFABURG LINE BROKEN

tions of the First, Third, and Fourth British French Army, and should penetrate through Armies the First, Third, Sixth Seventh, Cimbru and St Quentin towards Mau-Tenth French Armies, and the First Ameri- beuge. The French armies of Humbert can Army. Foch had now brought back the and Mangin were to leep Ludendorff German armies to the line on which, last as occupied round the nose of the curve. Toch first, they challenged the Allies for the calculated further that these attacks, if they mastery of Europe in France and in Bel prospered, would compel Ludendorff still gium. It ran from the coast, east of Y pres. further to draw upon his coastal sectors for and Armentieres, west of Douai, Cambra, reinforcements, and that when the Flanders and St Quentin, to La Fere From the front was thus weakened an attack on this Osse it curved round the St Goban massif, extreme flank by the Belgian army and the behind the Chemin des Dames, north of British Second Army would be successful Rheims and the old Moronvilliers position, A portion of Degoutte's army was sent and so eastwards through Champagne and northwards in readiness to add weight to the Forest of the Argonne to the Meuse this blow, and to the Fifth British Army, north of Verdun North of the line, not under Birdwood was assigned a task, in the parallel to it, but converging as it ran east neighbourhood of Lille and Lens similar to wards, was the great lateral rulway line that which Humbert and Mangin were to through Brussels, Mons, Maubeuge, Me- undertal e at the St Gobain maisif, namely, zieres, Sedan, and Metz, which was the that of pinning the Germans to their German chief artery of communications positions Foch desired to cut this artery, and his plan was to do so on either side of the great curve. Ludendorff had nothing to present except which the German line mide when, after passive resistance in his armoured lines leaving La Pere, it turned from north and The Hindenburg line was a popular name south, to west and east. The right wing of invented by the British soldiers. When his thrust would be made by Gouraud's Ludendorff assumed the post of adviser inarmy east of Rheims, and the American army chief on the Western Front at the end of east of the Argonne These would advance, 1916 the Germans had sustained that failure not through the Argonne Forest, but on at Verdun which cost them the cream of either side of it, thus escaping the over- their army, and had been heavily reduced whelming task of breaking a way through by the slogging match on the Somme Ludthe forests' protected mazes, the one army endorff's device for economizing men was aiming at Mezieres, the other at Sedan

curve, which is to be regarded as Foch's left- the Oise, and to make the chord impregnable wing thrust, was to be made by the Third by fortifications. Thus came into existence

As the result of the preliminary opers and Fourth British Armies and the First

As against this strategy of open warfare, to substitute a chord for an arc over the The attack on the western face of the portion of the front between the Somme and misnomer, for the area was several miles scale from the concrete pill-box to the underin depth-which ran from east of Arras and ground barracks, were provided for shelter. protected Cambrai (8 miles behind), St. Quentin, and La Fère, and continued its course to St. Gobain. This section in its northern part, covering Cambrai and St. Quentin, was called the Siegfried line by the Germans themselves; its southern portion, which covered Laon, was named the Alberich position. It was the Siegfried line that the British broke in September, 1918, and with it every hope of a resumed German offensive, or a continued German defensive. It was the most elaborate position of all.

Next in importance was the section which had been begun later as a protection should Vimy Ridge fall. It joined the Siegfried position at Quéant, west of Cambrai, and ran through Drocourt, behind Lens, up to Lille. The Germans called it the Wotan line, but the British, when Horne's First Army broke it on 2nd September, had no other name for it but the Drocourt-Queant switch. Other extensions of the Siegfried and Alberich lines were the Brunnhilde, in Champagne, and the Kriemhild and Michael positions, which protected the railway joining Mezières, Sedan, and Metz. The Germans had put all their knowledge of military fortification, and all the experience they had gained of trench-warfare in attack and defence during the war, as well as all the forced labour they could collect from Belgium and Northern France and from Russian prisoners, into the multiple works-

The Siegfried defences, which the British armies were to assault between Cambrai and St. Quentin, were 10 miles in depth from their outposts at Epéhy to their rearmost were constructed being that, however sucitself enclosed in a geometrically planned maze of fortresses. The wire in front of trenches was not double or treble, but sometimes hundreds of feet in depth; and each. Haig had carried out at Epéhy, no attack of portion was cut so as to defend another.

the fortified area-a "line" is a complete Heavily constructed works, advancing in Through the middle of the system ran the two canals, the Canal du Nord and the St Quentin, sunk in deep cuttings, which, by borings into the banks, were utilized to give inexpugnable shelter. Between Bellecourt and Vendhuille a tunnel hid the canal for 31 miles, and made an immense dug-out, connected with the trenches above by shafts. South of Bellecourt the cutting grew shallower, and was nearly flush with the ground at Bellenglise, where it was dry. On the hillier side were two rows of trench-systems, one 11 mile in advance. On the farther side the trenches began again.

This was where the great British blow was to be aimed, and it can now be recognized with what fortitude the British Commander steeled himself for it. He knew what Foch's plans were; he also knew how much depended on the British thrust on the right centre for their success. He knew, and has recorded the risks that were run, the long trial to which his armies had been subjected first in defence, and latterly in a period of fighting which had been uninterrupted since the second week in August. They had won victories, but victories, however cheaply won, exact lives, and lay a heavy burden on the nerves and stamina of the best troops: and it cannot be denied that, high as was the spirit of the armies of 1918, they had not the physical excellence of those of 1916, which were indeed the flower of British man-"the vast designs of those laboured rampart hood. He knew also that failure would not merely react on the whole scheme, but on the German spirit, which, declining now, would be lifted up to a new resistance, in Germany as well as at the front. But to quote words of his as simple as they are trenches, the idea of the plan on which they modest: "I was convinced that the British attack was the essential part of the whole cessful an assault might prove in breaking scheme, and that the moment was favourable. in, it must pause to collect guns and shells Accordingly I decided to proceed with the before going on, and meanwhile would find attack, and all preparatory measures were carried out as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible."1

After the preliminary operations, which * Field-Marghal Haig's Victory Dispatch, 7th Jan., 1919.

by the Americans till the night of 25th-26th could be no relaxation for the Germans there. September, the day before the battle of But on the left wing, where the British reinforced his front.

had taken 10,000 prisoners.

Farm, and took 7000 prisoners on the first portant for the attackers to obtain a footing

moment was set in motion by any Allied day. The country, pitted with shell-holes arm; for more than a week; and the German from years of bombardments, was hard to newspapers, in spite of the known hesitations traverse, but Gouraud went over 3 miles of Ludendorff, assured Germany that the of it on the first day. It took him three worst was over. The awakening of the days to get aeross the Challerange railway, dream was furnished by General Pershing's to turn the Moronvilliers position, and make First Army, which, immediately after its his way to onen country. But by 1st October success in the St. Militel salient, in which he was o miles from his starting point, and its reserve divisions had not been called upon, had captured 13,000 prisoners and 300 guns. was secretly transferred to the left bank of The right wing of Foeli's great blow was, the Meuse, while the utmost efforts were therefore, doing all that was expected of it, made to convince the Germans that an attack and Ludendorff must stiffen his lines against towards Metz from the St. Mihiel chord Gourand, as against Pershing. Meanwhile, was still intended. The French troops, Mangin was also moving, and took advantage holding the lines in front of Hill to a and the of Ludendorff's distractions to recapture Mort Homme were, in fact, not relieved Malmaison and enter Pinon Forest. There

27th September. Von Gallwitz, the Ger- armies were the weapon, the blow had bitten man group commander, was very imper- deepest of all. A very heavy bombardment, feetly acquainted either with the salient or beginning on the night of the 26th Septhe meaning of the transfer, and had not tember, paved the way for it, and extended along the front of the First, Third, and The backbone of the attack was made by Fourth Armies. The plan was to send foro American divisions, with French divisions ward the First and Third Armies first, to on either side of them supporting: and by clear the way as well as to mask the deterthe evening of the 27th the Americans had mining thrust which was to be delivered overwhelmed the Germans, bursting elear afterwards by the Fourth Army. At early through the first-line defences, and in the morning of the 27th, the First and Third eentre pressing forward 7 miles to the lower Armies went forward on a 12-mile front, slopes of Montfauçon. This was the hill on either side of Cambrai from Southez from which the Crown Prince had surveyed Lestrés to Gouzeaucourt. The 4 corps the operations on the west bank of the Meuse (Canadians, 17th, 6th, 4th) were to seize the during the attack at Verdun. The Ameri- crossings of the Canal du Nord opposite this cans tried hard, with the aid of Tanks, to sector. If they could do this, as they did, establish a record by capturing this hill to they would be able, even with a narrow footerown the day. They did not succeed, hold on the German side of the canal, to but they carried Montfauçon next day, and spread out fanwise to the north, and get with it the important position of Varennes. behind the German defenders who held By the evening of the 20th the Americans the less assailable northern portion of the were in possession of the first and second canal. The dangerous managure was acsystems of the fortified Kriemhild line, and complished; the canal was crossed, and over had a footing in the third system. They the whole 13 miles of front the infantry, with Tanks which got across afterwards to On the other side of the Argonne, Gour- help them, broke deeply into the Siegfried aud's division had attacked simultaneously positions. It was not done without fierce from Rheims eastwards on an 18-mile front, fighting: the German counter-attacks at While the Americans were stretching for- Beaucourt, Ribecourt, and the old Cambrai wards towards Montfauçon his division battle-ground of Flesquières Ridges, were stormed the network of trenches east of incessant, and resistance was strongest Moronvilliers, between Tahure and Navarin where, on the British right, it was most imin order to protect the flank of the Fourth line. The head of the assault was taken Army's attack when it followed.

42nd, and 3rd Divisions) were taken and The 9th Corps attacked the St. Quentin held, and the German front-line defenders Canal in the Bellenglise stretch, where the pushed back beyond them. In the centre, canal was deep sunk. The 46th Division, where the 57th Division secured the bridge- which led, took with it life-belts and mats heads, and the 52nd Division made use of and rafts: but many men dropped down the them, the high ground overlooking Grain- steep sides of the cutting and swam, and court was carried, and the 63rd and 4th after that stormed the German trenches on Canadians took Graincourt, and reached the the other bank. Once across they spread Bourlon Ridge of the first Cambrai attack, south and sliced through the surprised As soon as the line of the canal was made enemy, from whom this one division took safe the engineers got to work amid the 4000 prisoners and 70 guns. South of Bellfalling shells of the German long-range englise, the 1st and 6th Divisions reached guns, and their bridges enabled reinforce- the west end of the canal tunnel (Le Tronments to come up in order to meet the quoy), and linked up with the 32nd Division, German reserves. They were needed, for which had come up behind the triumphant there was hard fighting to do, but every hour 46th to consolidate and enlarge what they old names reappeared on the staff maps of had taken. positions taken, and by the end of the day North of Bellenglise the American Corps Graincourt, Fontaine-notre-Dame, Bourlon had a very difficult task, which cut it up Wood were held, and the victorious line severely in spite of all its eagerness and had spread itself north along the canal to courage. One of its divisions, the 30th, Paliuel, on the Sensée River. Next day the attacking the Bellecourt tunnel front, burst gap widened and deepened, north to south, through the defences of Bellecourt and got Palluel, Sailly, Fontaine-notre-Dame, No- to Nauroy beyond it, but was attacked by velles-sur-l'Escaut, Marcoing (a key position machine-gunners emerging from dug-outs over the Scheldt Canal), and Gouzeaucourt, in the division's rear. Australians, coming had been taken, together with 10,000 pri- up behind, had to deal with these without soners and the 200 guns employed in their any aid of artillery or Tanks, both of which defence.

Cambrai was now threatened from the north. While the First and Third Armies were thus preparing the way for the Fourth. in his attack by a roar of heavy fire on another 12 miles of German positions. This intensest bombardment of the war continued for 48 hours, driving the German defenders into their dug-outs, and cutting off their daily supplies.

At half-past five on the morning of 20th September, half an hour after the Third Army had opened one supporting attack between Vendhuille and Marcoing, where the canal makes a loop, and General Debeney had begun another in the St. Quentin sector, General Rawlinson's Fourth Army, in between the two, began on a 20-mile front its blows at the heart of the Siegfried

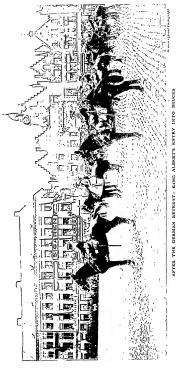
1 Nearly a million shells were fired.

by 3 corps-the 9th, the 2nd American But Ribecourt and Flesquières (5th, Corps, with the Australian Corps in support.

had gone forward with the main attack, but they were able to cope with them, and made a new link across the seas. The 27th American Division had a similar, and even more General Rawlinson's artillery was playing costly, experience, for it went too far in advance of its flanking British supports, and was badly enfiladed from Vendhuille. Nothing but desperate gallantry took the Americans on to Bony, where a ferocious struggle for the village which they captured put the finishing touch to their day's work. North of them the slopes about Vendhuille were also cleared by British divisions, who forced their way across the canal above the tunnel. Meanwhile, the Third Army had made the best of the day by capturing Masnières-a great point, since now it held the crossings of the Scheldt Canal between Masnières and Cambrai.

> This was the beginning. Next day the fissure was enlarged. The Tronquov tunnel





The King of the Belgians-in the centre, with the Queen on his left-reviewing his troops as they marched through the square on 25 October, 1918

sions-another splendid feat-and the Ger- who already had been withdrawing troops mans abandoned Gonnelieu and Villers from the Flanders front to protect Cambrai, Guislam as too hot to hod, thus ceding a must still further weaken that front in order further stretch of the Scheldt Canal On to meet the successive blows at his centre the 31st the 0th Corps and the Australians. Ludendorff had been obliged to take the linked up with Debeney in an attack on risk he may have thought that, in view of either side of St Quentin, the immediate the paralysis of the British advance on the consequence of which was that the Germans ridges in September and October of 1017. retired from that town The attack was now he might rely on a similar protection to the general all along the front of the four armies. German lines by mud in 1918 A good deal the three British and the French Leverguier of rain had already fallen to lend substance was taken (32nd Division) The Australians, to this hope Accordingly, he so far reduced passing through the ground captured by the his garrison as to have only 5 divisions to Americans, pressed on to the last line of the protect the 17 miles of front, Dixmude to Siegined system at Beaurevoir The New Voormezeele-5 miles south of Ypres The Zealanders and 3rd Division crept closer to British line at this time ran Voormezeele-Cambra: The Canadian Corps cleared the Ploegsteert - Nieppe - Neuve - Chapelle - Gihigh ground at Ramillies and Blecourt, so venchy Kemmel Hill had long been that Cambrai was now practically encircled abandoned by the Germans in response to By 3rd October the Fourth Army had broken their need of shortening the line, and nothing through the Beaurevoir line, and the Sieg- but sharp rear-guard actions had marked the fried defences along it were in British pos- British occupation of Neuve Eglise and Hill session Sequebart and Le Catelet were 61 Bailleul was found unoccupied on 10th attacked, the latter falling to the 50th Divi- August, and by the evening of 6th September sion after a counter-attack which was an the whole of the Lys salient had disappeared and Germans had met in 1914

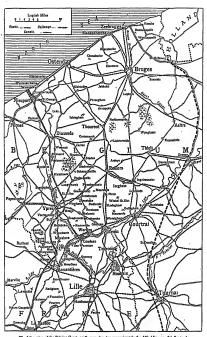
Maubeuge General Haig and his armies thereby obtained the advantages of surprise had put the finishing touch to General Foch's On the left of the attack, where the Ger-

Vot 11

was taken by the 1st and 22nd British Divi- north. Foch had foreseen that Ludendorff,

echo of the last fight there, in which British On oth September, following the piercing of the Drocourt-Queant line by General The La Terriere plateau, which dominates Horne and the First British Army, Marshal a bend of the Scheldt Canal, was also the Foch, in a conference held at Cassel, had scene of a last bid by the German defenders outlined to King Albert of Belgium the The command of the Scheldt Canal went nature of the attack to be delivered in order with it, and with this result of the nine days' to take advantage of the drawing away of battle departed the last hope that the Ger- German divisions from this part of the front mans could have entertained of staying The Belgium army, strengthened by French their opponents by fortified positions. The divisions, was to attack in conjunction with greatest of them had been broken in their part of Sir Herbert Plumer's Second British hands Thirty British and 2 American Army The attack planned for 28th Sepdivisions had worsted 30 German divisions tember, when that of the British armies of holding the strongest positions ever fortified the centre was surging through the Siegfried by military capacity, had despoiled them of defences, was as successful as Foch had 36,000 prisoners and 380 guns. At last, hoped. Under the weight of the Francoafter four years of effort, the barner had been Belgian-British attack the thinly-held Gerpierced The threat to the German railway man front melted away In the British sector, communications was now direct, for nothing on a front of 41 miles south of the Ypresbut the natural obstacles of open country- Zonnebeke road, the 19th Corps and 2nd and an incompleted and insignificant trench. Corps of the Second Army went forward line-lay between the British armies and without a preliminary hombardment, and

mans were well wired in, a bombardment Its results had already appeared in the of great intensity-guns almost wheel to



The Liberation of the Belgian Coss, 1918: map showing approximately the Allies' line on 28th September—represented by the solid line—and on 25th October—represented by the broken line—when the King and Queen of the Belgian most their state cuty into Bruges.

the rain and mud to complete the discom- guns. fiture of the German troops who opposed In all, as the result of this delivery of a them. There was one fierce focus of resist- thrust under the direction of a master who ance at the Château de Blankaart, but else- had been able to find and to choose the right where the Belgians went at a bound over moment for it, the Germans had been forced nearly the whole of the ground that had been out of their positions so long and firmly held won with such anguished effort in 1917 by on the sea flank; their own right wing was the British, and perforce abandoned earlier being seriously threatened with envelopin 1918. At the end of the day their line ment; they had lost 200 guns, or more, reached Woumen, Pierkenshoek, Schaap which they could ill afford, and ammunition Baillie, and Broodseinde. The British right which they could not replace. In the month (14th, 35th, 29th, 9th, 41st, and 36th Divi- of September alone the Germans had lost sions) swept up all the old battle-ground 120,102 men, 2844 officers, 1600 guns, and along the Menin road, and passing far beyond 10,000 machine-guns. Since Foch had the farthest limits of the 1917 battles, reached first struck on 15th July the Allies had and captured Karteuilde, Zandvoorde, taken a quarter of a million prisoners, 3669 Kruiseecke, and Beccleare. The General guns, and 23,000 machine-guns. Foch had of brigade who led the way along the Menin driven his great attack home, and the German road rode unmolested at the head of his army was crumbling. As he had expected, men through the streets of Gheluvelt. South it began to yield in the intervals between of the main attack 3 British divisions (31st, the blows. By the beginning of October 20th, and 24th) carried the attack forward the German line was beginning to withdraw as far as the outskirts of Messines, and ended in front of Lens and Armentières, and from the day with a struggle for Wytschaete.

ridge between Wytschaete and the canal at these points. Early on 3rd October north of Hollebeke was British, and the Armentières was reoccupied, and Lens at Belgians were in Houthulst Forest and out- last cleared. The factories of the first, and flanking it. On the following day-another the coal-pits of the second, were found one of pouring rain-the Belgian, French, damaged or destroyed with Prussian and British, keeping perfect touch, trudged thoroughness. forward through the wilderness of shell- On the yielding German front all the holes and slush, and over the apologies for armies now began to fight again from Dix-Gheluvelt and Ledeghem, and threatened factories, especially in Britain, were increas-

wheel-swept away the engineered defences. Menin. They had captured in the course and the Belgian army went forward through of the operations 5000 prisoners and 100

the big salient round the St. Gobain massif. By the night of 28th September all the At once Haig and Mangin began to press

roads, and took Moorslede. A counter- mude to the Meuse; and for a time German attack was beaten off by the Belgians to the moral showed tokens of collapse, especially north of Houthulst village: Passchendaele on the British front, where prisoners were and Stadenberg were made secure: Dixmude taken in numbers, and there were many signs -at last-was eneircled and taken, and the of disorder and confusion in the German Belgians neared Roulers. The Belgian ranks. Foeh's great blow had been dearmy, so long pinned to its watery trenches, livered: it had done all he expected, and all had emerged from them to take 5500 Ger- Ludendorff feared. Germany had no more man prisoners and 100 guns. Meanwhile, new troops to fill out the skeletons of the Plumer's division swung round the Messines bone-picked divisions, the shells and mili-Ridge, retaking Messines and Ploegsteert tary stores piled up for the German offensive Wood. In the first week of October, the had fallen into the hands of the victors of Belgians passed well beyond the line Moor- the Franco-British offensive, together with slede-Staden - Dixmude, and the Second thousands of guns. Neither guns nor shells British Army cleared the left bank of the could be made good by the works of Essen Lys from Comines southwards, captured or Skoda, while all the time the Aliied power, the support of America

Americans were accumulating to drive in East the situation was growing more helpless Ludendorff's communications west of Metz, every day, Bulgara, Turkey, Austria-Hunin the centre the British were gazing over gury were moribund. On 28th September the plains of Cambras, the Hindenburg line Ludendorff and Hindenburg met the Kaiser. behind them, in the west the Belgians were and demanded that Germany should ask fighting confidently in the open Luden- for an armistice

ing their output, and hid in this, as in man-dorff's centre was pinned, and both wings were threatened with envelopment He On the German left more and more could but go from bad to worse, for in the

CHAPTER XX

FOCH'S CAMPAIGN OF 1918-STEPS TO THE ARMISTICE

In spite of the recognition by Ludendisaster

Everywhere, on the wings and in the dorff and Hindenburg that all hopes of a centre, the Allied armies, if they did not German renaissance were vain, they were mark time, had to go forward at a slow march willing to assure the German Government. The Belgian armies did not re-enter Roulers that delaying actions could be fought, which till nearly a fortnight after they were within might protract the war till the following rifle shot of it, and it was not till the middle spring, and that there was no fear of collapse of October that the completion of the libera-These assurances were based on tangible tion of the Belgian coast-line could be taken considerations. On every field where the in hand. The advance was resumed on Franco-British forces had sought and found 14th October, when, after another five hours' victory, farther progress was extremely bombardment of great intensity, the Beldifficult, because four years' war had devas- gian army, with French divisions on either tated so wide a zone on either side of the flank, and the roth, roth, and 2nd Corps of trench-line from the sea to the Argonne General Plumer's Second Army on the south. The British centre was situated in a region went forward on a 28-mile front, from where the roads had been destroyed, the Dixmude to Wervicq, against General railways torn up, the ground like a Gruvere von Linem's Fourth German Army One cheese for holes there was little shelter and might almost say that the result of the enhardly an unbroken roof French and gagement was a foregone conclusion. On Americans and Belgians all were dependent the Belgian front King Albert's soldiers on communications over wrecked and swept over a stretch of country in which blasted country, and before great armses there were hardly any but surrendering could get forward, or even get again to grips bodies of Germans to resist them, except at with a foe retreating under an organization. Iseghem, which they had to carry. The little disintegrated in its smooth working, French took Roulers. The resistance on the roads and railways had to be rebuilt, the British side was tougher. The 10th and the ground swept Thus, though Foch 19th Corps, on the south, had to break threatened the German armies with a huge through stubborn resistance to reach the envelopment, the situation resembled that rising ground overlooking Menin and Wevelof the Japanese and Russian armies after ghem, and the 2nd Corps had to fight for the battles of Liao-yang and Mukden, when, Moorseele The Allied captures of the for different reasons, the Japanese could day, however, numbered some 8000 prisnot press their victories home so as to con- oners and a number of intact batteries-a vert the Russian defeat into irretrievable sign of the pulverized resistance at some sectors of the front These signs were yet



"Feeding" the front line from the air by personate during the last days of fighting



gians were able to move on towards Thourous, till oth October, though afterwards it beand the British towards Courtrai and Com- came more rapid. The First French Army ines. Von Einem's army, its main lines of was only to miles east of St. Quentin by communications with the Lille salient cut, 10th October; Goursud's Champagne army and its road of retirement eastward narrowed. made only 2 miles in a week; and the project was forced to release its hold on the coast. of nipping the Germans out of the Argonne By the night of the 15th von Einem had lost by a double advance on either side of it was 12,000 prisoners; by the 16th Menin and still hanging fire. The task of General Wervice had been occupied, Thourout sur- Pershing, and after him of General Liggett, rendered, Courtral encircled, and Doual in taking the Americans through the Arthreatened farther south. By the 17th the gome has been compared in its difficulties Lombartzyde-Ostend stretch of Belgian with those which the British experienced coast had been abandoned; and the Belgian in the First Battle of the Somme, so well cavalry which had entered Ostend was at did the forest's tangle of fallen timber, and the gates of Bruges. The French were in its tree-clad ridges, lend themselves to the Wynghene; the British at Tourcoing.

These events had their repercussion machine-gun, and their well-served artillery. farther south, where, on 17th October also, Taken altogether, the most useful profailure.

Armies the progress was similarly slow at being occupied elsewhere), the Third Army

more apparent the next day, when the Bel- first, some Germans lingering in Cambrai exercise of the German's best weapon-the

the 8th Division of the 8th Corps of General gress was made in the centre and the right Horne's First British Army broke through centre. General Mangin and General the enemy's rear-guards to capture Douai, Dégoutte, whose task it had been to hold the and General Birdwood's Fifth Army Germans rather than to bruise their own crowned weeks of steady pressure about heads against them at the St. Gobain pivot, Lille by liberating that long-oppressed town, were able to manœuvre the enemy back as The troops concerned in the completing he gave way at other points; and on the 13th operations were the 57th and 59th Divisions of October the French Tenth Army re-(1rth Corps). This advance also comprised entered Laon, so long the seat of German and completed the liberation of Courtrai, Great General Head-quarters, and estabpart of which had been occupied after the lished trenches on the line of the River Serre advance of the Second Army from Menin, beyond. A pause was here made for six but the remainder of which had been ruth- days. In the meantime Haig was seconding lessly shelled by the Germans after their Pétain's efforts by a series of fierce rushes departure. Valenciennes, a vital centre which must have delighted that master of of railway communications, and Tournai, the military art, Foch, who declared that were reached by the British First and Fifth for the great attack a commander must throw Armies respectively on the 22nd; and on in every man and every gun without a backthe 25th King Albert re-entered Bruges in ward thought of repulse. As soon as his state. These and the subsequent operations engineers could bring up men and guns on the western flank connote the German Haig forced fresh openings. On 3rd October plan of a deliberate retirement to the shorter General Braithwaite made the first move of line of the Meuse, with a necessary cession a powerful gambit by attacking the Beauof their hold on Belgium, but with a prospect revoir defensive line along an 8-mile front, of inflicting another winter's heavy task and, breaking through it, reached Monton the Allies before battle could again be brehain. He sent back 4000 prisoners. joined in the spring. The design counted Farther north passages of the Scheldt Canal on wearing down the patience of the Allies; were forced at Le Catelet and Crevecoeur. it took no account of the broken spirit of These movements were preliminary to the their own people, which was the cause of its formal opening of the Second and last phase of the British offensive, in which the right In front of the British Third and Fourth of General Home's First Army (the left

General Debeney protected their right.

move on 8th October, when the British Third First Army joined, was to force the Selle and Fourth Armies advanced on a 17-mile River and push the Allied line forward till front. Their operation was but a part of the it should run straight from the Sambre and larger one which extended past St. Quentin Oise Canal, past the Forest of Mormal, to and the Oise through Champagne to the east Valenciennes. The critical action, well of the Meuse, practically all the Allied understood to be so by the Germans, was armies taking part in it. The Third fought along a 10-mile front from Le Cateau British Army led the attack, followed by the southwards. It was not an easy victory; Fourth. The German resistance opened for two days the Germans fought strongly. well; it collapsed with a suspicious sudden- but they were not in positions to stay perness that can only be attributed to the manently, and by the 19th the canal was deterioration of the spirit of the German turned at all points south of Catillon, and armies. Von Falkenhayn, in his memoirs, the Fourth Army's front, northwards, rested observes that throughout the war a break- on the River Richemont. overran them to a depth of a miles.

British Commander-in-Chief directed the some of their hours of greatest resolution. attack of his centre along the historic route Once, however, the line of the Selle had of invasion, with Namur, the meeting-place been broken the British advance resumed of the Sambre and the Meuse, as its strategic the aspect not of an assault but of a steady goal, and Maubeuge its sign-post.

and the Fourth Army, moved forward with towards it on 17th October, when the comtheir left flank on the canal line running munications sufficient to ensure supply had north-east from Cambrai to Mons, while been made secure, and attacked in the neighbourhood of Le Cateau. The immediate The gambit was continued by an attacking design of the operations, in which the French

through could only be carried out when the The Third Army's task, which was to bring moral of the beaten side had been under- up the next northern section parallel with , mined by one cause or another. That was this, and to force the Selle River, north of happening-had happened among the Ger- Le Cateau, in the process, was no easier. mans in front of Haig's divisions-and no- The First Army contributed a division (4th) thing but their organization-like a machine on the northern flank of the Third Army, which goes on running in spite of the failing which attacked with 7 divisions (19th, motive-power—pulled them out of disaster. Guards, 62nd, 42nd, 5th, 17th, 88th) on As it was, the Third and Fourth Armies the morning of 20th October. The Gerbroke through the partially-completed de- mans had reinforced the normal river defences; the Tanks, following the infantry, fences with heavily-wired screens, and the Third Army had to fight very hard to get Every road to Le Cateau was blocked with across, and to keep the heights on the Ger-German transport, with which the retreating man side, when the river was won. (On troops mingled; and 10,000 of the troops the same day other troops of the First Army surrendered. Another 200 German guns occupied Denain, and reached the slopes were added to the thousands in the Allied overlooking the Ecaillon River.) The Selle possession. The next day (on which Cam- River fight was one which called forth as brai was cleared) the cavalry were able to much heroism, and as much determination take up the pursuit, and by nightfall the in the face of discouragement, as any action advance-guard was within 2 miles of Le of the war; and the struggles at Amerval, Cateau, and had captured Baudry. The Neuvilly, and Briastre were a proof that Selle River was reached the next day, and, whatever the decline of moral which had though the cavalry could not rush the river, exhibited itself among the Germans a fortthe British line was established along it by night or even a week before elsewhere, here 13th October, with bridge-heads secured at any rate the idea of defence had perfor subsequent crossing. Henceforward the meated a residue to the point of recalling

drive, in which the Third, Fourth, and First The Fourth Army was the first to move Armies exerted differing degrees of pressure, from the British pickets. In the next three Division, crossing the Sambre in rafts, days the Third and Fourth Armies were well fought another battle of Landrecies, where part.

During these days, when the Third and Armies went into action with all the heavy 91st American Division fell Audenarde.

and almost for the last time the Tanks were British armies and one French army should

and attained different extents of forward present as the symbol of that rolling, irremovement according as there were fortified sistible movement which, earlier in the war, villages, open country, or swamps to cross. had been so unfortunately symbolized as the The action of the night of 22nd October and steam-roller. On the whole 20 miles the the morning of 23rd October secured the German positions were entered. On the Ecaillon River (First Army), the smaller river right the oth Corps (General Braithwaite), Harpier on a wide front (Third Army), and of the Fourth Army, had one of the the west edge of the wood of L'Evêque heaviest tasks in crossing the broad Sambre, (Fourth Army). By the 24th the Mormal but fought its way across near Catellon, and Forest, which had acted as a reservoir for by nightfall was 3 miles cast. North of German reserves, was reached on its western it the 13th Corps drove the Germans outskirts, and Le Quesnov was only a mile into the Mormal Forest, and the 25th to the north-east of the railway running from once the British Guarda had been engaged Le Quesnoy to Valenciennes: and by the in 1014, and where now a battalion of the 26th the advance of the First Army in the Prussian Guards were driven out. North Condé loop of the Scheldt had made the of the forest the 37th Division and the New encirclement of Valenciennes certain. That Zealanders threw the Germans back over the town was taken on the morning of 1st Valenciennes railway, and the New Zea-November by a combined movement in landers had the signal, and almost mediæval, which the 17th Corps (Third Army) and the honour of receiving the surrender of the 22nd Canadian Corps (Fourth Army) took walled town of Le Quesnoy from its German commandant.

At the end of the day the right of the First Fourth British Armies were refusing to be Army and the left of the Third Army were shaken off from the harried German divisions, aligned on a front 5 miles east of Valenthe other armies of the Allied line were all ciennes. On the right of the Fourth Army, exerting the utmost pressure consistent with General Debeney's First French Army, the possibilities of supply. Dégoutte, with supporting Haig's thrust, had attacked on a a French army in Belgium, was improving 6-mile front east of Evassigny, between Croy the Allied position south-east of Ghent; and Tapigny; had forced a crossing over Mangin and Guillaumat were wheeling the Sambre canal to the north of Guise, and round, with Debeney as their pivot, towards kept pace with the British. In this Franco-Guise, and the Americans and Gouraud were British victory-the final blow at the German attaining hard-won success on the eastern centre-the resistance of the enemy was enveloping wing of the Argonne. It will broken, and the war gave him no further add to clearness, however, to follow im- opportunity to rally. In all, 24,000 prisoners mediately the steps of the British armies were taken and more than 500 guns. South after Valenciennes had been won, and after of this movement, that of the French and French, American, and British divisions had Americans between the Aisne and the Meuse co-operated in clearing the Scheldt bank from had been augmented with results that are Avelghem and Anseghem to Mooreghem still to be considered. North of it the two (31st October). The pieces were set for the French corps which stiffened the Belgian big attack on a 30-mile front from Valen-right, and took two thrusting American diviciennes to the River Sambre on 4th Novem- sions with them, had driven the Germans ber, when the First, Third, and Fourth farther back along the Scheldt, To the

paraphernalia of bombardments and barrage, Foch's design had contemplated a double both of a kind perfected by long practice. attack on either side of the great L-shaped It was the last full-dress battle of the war; bulge of the German front, in which three strike at the western side of the L, while when a rapid advance would have been so Gouraud's army and the Americans, Foch's advantageous. But the slowness was an right wing, drove in at the southern leg. inevitable consequence of want of experi-What effects the first-named of these attacks ence, and could not have been avoidedproduced has been narrated. It remains to unless another year had been spent in preexamine the course of the right-wing paration. The whole point of the American Franco-American push, without which the attack was that it had been undertaken and First, Third, and Fourth British Armies, urged by Pershing in full knowledge of the and the First French Army, could not have risks and disabilities, just as Haig selected prosecuted their design. (That is to say, to attack the Siegfried line in spite of the they would have encountered very much terrible consequences of failure. ploiting that success to the uttermost.)

October, Gourand was at Challerange, having pushed forward through the crater country 13,000 prisoners and 300 guns. Pershing's Americans, at a slightly earlier date, were in possession of Montfauçon, on the eastern proposed to pinch out the Germans by an advance on either side), and had penetrated some distance into the forest. But the advance of the Americans on the flank of the country that the Germans held.

indeed, extremely exasperating at a moment in whose plans the aim there did not mature

more resistance. Further, it is to be re- It was the determination of Haig and marked that the steady pressure of Humbert Pershing to go on, in spite of all, which gave and Mangin round the angle of the L was Foch confidence in his plan, and brought essential to the success of the design; and the war to an end in 1918 instead of 1919. that the Franco-Belgian-British thrust in Pershing's three-quarters of a million Ameri-Belgium, though contingent on success at cans were a threat never absent from Ludenthe centre, aided the main armies in ex- dorff's calculations, and obliged him always to detach divisions to watch them. The The earlier stages of the Gouraud-Pershing very fact that the Americans had to fight movement have been recorded. On 1st for every foot they advanced indicates the apprehension with which German Headquarters regarded their presence. In the of the Champagne battle-field and taken first week of October the Americans made little or no progress in bursting their way from the positions in the forest to which their first impetus had carried them. Then, side of the Argonne (from which it had been fortunately, some order having been brought in to the supply services, it became possible to apply the pinching device which had first been planned for the capture of the Argonne. On oth October, after a two days' bitter Argonne was very much hampered by en- struggle, the Americans (28th and 82nd filading fire from the wooded heights and Divisions) took Chatel, a dominating front ravines of the Argonne; and to silence the on the eastern side of the forest, Meanwhile, guns posted there the left of the American Gouraud had begun his advance to the First Army had to fight its way forward Aisne, and had edged his way up the western through o miles of the most naturally-difficult side. The Germans saw the threat, and, fearful of encroachment and loss of guns, While the 1st American Corps did this withdrew. Thus was part of the plan severe and costly work, in which it sustained accomplished, and the Americans, clear of a high proportion of its losses through over- the forest, came into touch with the Germans keenness and under-experience, the 5th and at Grandpré. General Pershing at this date ard Corps worked their way forward on the gave the command of the First American side. Their difficulties of supply were Army to General Liggett, and himself went hardly less formidable than those of tactics, to organize the daily-arriving American and the progress of the division on the right troops into a Second American Army on of the forest was slowed down almost to that the other side of the St. Mihiel salient, of those within it. This was the slowing where they were a component of that threat down of Foch's right wing which provoked to Metz of which Ludendorff was continua good deal of criticism at the time, and was, ally in fear, and concerning which Foch,

Argonne, nevertheless, continued slow, and On 1st November the French and Americans eaused Foels some perturbation, while it attacked on either side of the Forest of seems to have exercised an encouraging Bourgogne, into which the Argonne melts effect on Ludendorff, who, hardening his on the north. Gouraud seized the heights heart about the middle of October, since opposite Vouziers, and threatened the line

a war of endurance. But while he was still for fight as any that had fought hand to hand endeavouring to bring it round to this view for the Argonne, attacked on the Meuse the Battle of the Selle befell him, and the valley, and one corps, breaking clean

the Kriembilde line.

of the Kriemhilde line on 14th October, as before Haig's blows; and for the same when, from Grandpre to the Meuse, reason, that they were opposed to troops Gouraud and Liggett attacked in concert. who, despite all that they had done and Grandpré fell to the Americans on the 16th, endured, still wanted to fight, while the and Vouziers to Gouraud, who this day German infantry had had enough. erossed the Aisne. For three days more the On 2nd November the Americans capcepted.

Mézières and Sedan to shut the way to the American division reached Sedan. south, and Humbert and Mangin still Thus one goal of Foeh's right wing had gripped the retreating Germans about Leon been reached, and not very much behind

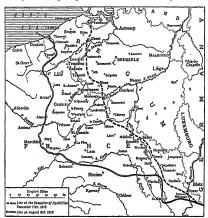
for some time yet to come, deceived him. in the middle. The Gouraud-Liggett wing. The American progress east of the in this final advance, may be followed first, his retreat had not been paralysed but had of the Aisne towards the Meuse-Aisne Canal. been orderly, suggested to the Government 'The Americans, with new divisions as eager First American Army at last came up into through the damaged Kriembilde defences, went forward 5 miles at a bound. The The battle began for the forward positions Germans began to break and erumble here

Americans hammered at the Kriemhilde tured Buzancy and spread round east of the line, making not a great deal of impression, Bourgogne Forest, while Gouraud threatened but never letting go, and forcing the Ger- to surround it from the west. The Germans mans to put in division after division, left it hastily; and that American eagerness including one of the Guards, to keep the which had been so costly hitherto now served attackers out. They did not succeed, and the Americans well, for they plunged forward the Americans pierced the position at its even in the darkness, giving the Germans centre on the 18th-19th October, a day no time to reorganize, and one division (2nd before Haig's divisions had taken the line American) passing straight through their of the Selle. Ludendorff's promise of a lines. With nothing to beat, the Americans, successful withdrawal had rested on holding making up for some past delays, rushed up back the double thrust on either side of their long-range guns and shelled the his centre-Haig on the Selle, the Gouraud- railway at Longuyon and Montmédy. On Liggett combination from the vital railway. 3rd November Gouraud and Liggett joined Both props had given way, and on 26th hands north of the Bourgogne Forest, and October Ludendorff's resignation was ac- Gouraud now was able to threaten the Brunnhilde section of the Hindenburg line Foel's plan underwent no modifications: in Champagne by pushing forward east of it was elastic enough to conform to new it beyond Attigny with the American troops conditions, as well as to stretch round who had got through the Kriemhilde unexpected difficulties. The German section. On 4th November, by seizing the armies had now to get back to the Meuse southern portion of the Aisne-Meuse Canal through a narrowing door. Foch ordered (which runs from Attigny to Sedan), he the Belgian-French-American forces on the managewred the Germans out of their Scheldt to cross the river above Audenarde Brunnhilde line by the threat of his advance in order to assist Haig in his advance towards to Mézières. The next day the Americans Maubeuge, Mons, and Namur, while leapt forward another 6 miles, and on the Gourand and Liggett pressed onwards to day that Gourand entered Rethel an

later, because he was delayed by the Brunn- Briev and Metz. hilde line defenders, who had suffered no Sedan, pushed their right wing eastwards communications had been great; those of

schedule time. Gouraud reached his point dorff, from the St. Mihiel front towards

It remains but to speak of the co-ordinated preliminary beating. Mézières was attained movement of the rest of the armies which on the night of 10th November, Meanwhile, had been manœuvred under Foch's plan. the Americans, settling down in front of The difficulties of their advance over broken



Map showing approximately the Allied Line on 8th August, 1918, and on Armistice Day, 11th November, 1918

had been prematurely anticipated by Luden- same day, anticipating the heavy attack

and crossed the Meuse. Thereafter three of the Germans on their congested roads of Gouraud's corps joined with the American retreat began to accumulate, and were made, army to lay hands on the wooded heights of infernal by the relentless bombing directed the Meuse between Sedan and Dun. When from the unsubdued aeroplanes of the the Armistice came into effect on 11th Allies. On 5th November, Haig had left November the Franco-American line was the Mormal Forest, the difficulties of which well across the Meuse, and within 6 miles had disappeared almost mysteriously in the of Montmédy. The Second American Army changed aspect of the times; and by the 8th had at that date begun the advance, which the Fourth Army was at Avesnes. On the

of the Scheldt line, the Germans disap- blows contemplated would have been effecpeared from the river, the British, French, tive, or the cost, which would have been and Americans in hot pursuit Plumer took great, in men, the certainty is that the task Tournai, and Birdwood occupied Renain would have been accomplished, and that On the oth the Guards Division and the Germany, as a nation would have shrunk-62nd Division occupied the fortress of did shrink-from the bloodshed, before the Maubeuge, which had been in August, 1914, Allies Since 15th July, when Foch sent the projected rendezvous of the British Mangin and Degoutte to the attack between Expeditionary Force, and on 11th Novem- the Marne and the Aisne, the French had ber, a few hours before the Armistice came taken 140,000 prisoners, the British 188,000. into being, the Canadians, who had immor- the Americans 44,000, the Belgians 14,000, talized Passchendaele, re-entered Mons, and nearly 7000 guns had been captured

certainty the truth that the German army, Germany nor the German armies could bear despite its protestations, then and thereafter, more was beaten, though it is not to be denied men composing the opposed forces, the additional 5000 guns, besides 30,000 machine-Allies would have found enormous difficul- guns, 3000 trench mortars, and 2000 aeroties in bringing up the means with which planes The naval surrenders included 6 to annihilate the still-working German battle-cruisers, 10 battleships, 8 light machine. The next blow, already in pre- cruisers, 50 destroyers, and all the sub-Gouraud, and the First and Second Ameri- was to be occupied by the Allies All Gercan Armies towards the north of Metz, while man troops were to be withdrawn from other yet another thrust would have been made territory than that of the Central Powers, by divisions which Foch could well have and the treaties of Bucharest and Brest-

which the Allies had planned on the whole profitless to discuss the period in which the from which the British retreat had begun Add to these the enemy's losses in killed The terms of the Armistice reflected with and wounded, and it will be seen that neither

The terms of the Armistice demanded. that, apart from the contrasted spirit of the in addition to evacuation of territory, an paration, would have been concerted by marines. A zone of territory on the Rhine spared to the south of the fortress. It is Litovsk were declared mull and you

CHAPTER XXI

ITALY'S SHARE IN THE WAR

Italy's intervention in the war was the di San Giuliano, and the German Ambasoutcome of the feelings of the Italian people sador, Herr von Flotow, in which the Italian that right was on the side of the Allies, and Ministers pointed out that Austria had no in the interval, before the declaration of right to take such a step without previous war was made against Austria-Hungary, agreement with her allies, of whom Italy was Italian feeling was steadily pushing its Gov- one Subsequently Italy made her position ernment towards this decision. But till the clearer by declaring that if she did not receive time of that declaration the promptings of adequate "compensation" for Austria's Italian diplomacy were more slowly feeling disturbance of the Balkans the Triple Alliance a way to the same course of action On would be irreparably broken-in other words, 25th July, 1914, two days after Austria's that she was absolved from joining Austriaultimatum to Serbia, a meeting was held Hungary and Germany in the war, and that between the Italian Prime Minister, Signor her neutrality was provisional On 4th Salandra, the Foreign Minister, Marchese August Italy published a declaration of which would have compelled Italy to take Hungary. On the same day Austria, who up arms with Germany and Austria had could by no means have been prepared for not been fulfilled. This declaration was of the decision, attacked the Italian outnosts enormous service to the Allies, because it in the Carnic Alps. It is important to freed France from the obligation to protect remember that Italy's declaration of war her south-eastern frontier, and relieved both against Austria was delivered at a moment Great Britain and France from the appre- when the hopes of the Allies had received hension of a dangerous situation in the a considerable diminution by the success Mediterranean. The choice was in the of von Mackensen in rescuing the Austriahighest degree creditable to Italy and to Hungarian armies from their plight in Italian diplomacy. Two things determined Galicia, and in setting in motion that great it: the first, that neither Government nor military movement which resulted in the country could join hands with Germany and clearance of Galicia and Volhynia, the can-Austria; the second, the conviction which ture of Warsaw, and the immobilization dawned in the minds of a few that now was of the Russian armies commanded by the the time to complete Italian unity.1

A number of "conversations" took place Italy's determination, and of preventing her from converting her standpoint of neutrality into one of belligerency. In general, the which Italy would accept. This something,

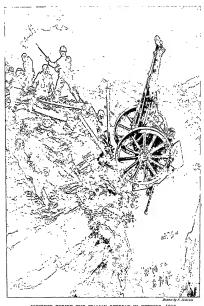
neutrality, pointing out that the conditions 1915, Italy declared war against Austria-Grand Duke Nicholas.

At the time of Italy's declaration of war, between the representatives of the quondam she had neither enough guns nor machine-Triple Alliance with the purpose of shaking guns for her forces; she was as badly off as Great Britain had been for heavy guns; for there was no modern heavy artillery except in the fortresses; and Italy was very badly attitude of Austria, as represented succes- equipped industrially for making them for sively by Count Berchtold and Baron Burian, herself, because coal and iron had to be immay be said to have assumed the form of ported, and blast furnaces were few. During purchasing Italian neutrality by the offer the three years' fighting there were never of the smallest amount of compensation enough guns and never abundance of shells,

The strategic problem which Italy had to or this "parecchio", as it was styled by face was also a serious one. Into the plains Signor Giolitti, the leader of the "Neutral- of Italy runs the rocky wedge of the Trentino ists", and a most powerful force in Italian which was held by Austria, and an enemy politics, was rejected by Baron Sonnino, advance from which could cut off a wide who had become Foreign Minister after stretch of territory lying to the east of it, the the death of the Marchese di San Giuliano plains of Venetia and Friuli. The frontier in October, 1914. Prince von Bülow, who which Italy had to defend-to be styled replaced Herr von Flotow as German Am- rather than as the frontier across which she bassador in Rome, struggled hard to for- could advance-was more than 480 miles in mulate an accommodation between the length. It was divisable into three sectors: Italian and the Austrian views, and when the Trentino salient; the barrier of the his efforts were seconded by the Neutralists Dolomites and the Carnic Alps, north-east it seemed for a time that he would succeed, of it; and the so-called Isonzo front, from and that Italy would remain neutral. But Pontebba to the Adriatic. The Trentino when the resignation of Signor Salandra offered possibilities to Austria for an invasion, gave colour to this supposition, the whole though it is to be noted that you Falkenhavn of the country rose in protest against any and the German Head-quarters Staff set such arrangement. Signor Salandra was their faces against such an undertaking, recalled, and on 20th May the will of the and were perturbed when, eventually, the country was recorded by the solemn vote Austrian Commander - in - Chief, General of Chamber and Senate. On 23rd May, Conrad von Hoetzendorff, attempted it with only a single line of railway to supply his troops. But it offered no possibilities to

' Italy's Part in the War, by W. K. M'Chare, ' (Bemporad: Florence.)





INCIDENT DURING THE ITALIAN RETREAT IN OCTOBER, 1917
Italian artillerymen pitching their gun over a monatain precipice to prevent it falling into the hands
of the advancing Austrians

Italy for a successful attack. The floats absorbed a proportion of the scamy supply say on a constant and the same and the same appropriate of the same appropriate of the same and out the products of accounts overcled of gene. Among the time of personal of the country products of t north-cast of a were too distinct for care; and countries, on the east god of the attempt large-scale operations in them, this wedge, and of blocking those on the The 1800s, or eastern front, was the only western side. They occupied Cortical during contract of the contract And products, or consecut stems, who are way because the product of pieces, the last week in May, 1915, as well as the consecution of the consecut one meant any mean any prospers on presence; and now were in many, 1944, so were so use the firm Peniebbs to the Isomor willey mounts heights dominating the Monte Croce Pass. tains still blocked the way, and the upper and

our of proma majoratament to a magain standard were conset to sensing the constance of the passes, the Sixthy, Tondard Carnie, Age to the so three of the passes, the Sixthy, Tondard Carnie, Age and 237 any. An east on some and some appearance of the source of

The foregoing were defensive measures.



There was but one gap—the zo-mile opening which popular espectation had looked for. Ance no continue german commentation and superior superior conductions of the form Indian Comments of the Rama Someton had concluded with Sir on the control and the control of the source of the source of the control of the the toos the treat cares communitying as given the second community of the plaints which led to difficulties, with Austria's Slav mess. The Allahed and Agram. North of Gorisla race arrangement, which was rather of the nature the Bainter platen. It was this sector of an old-style diplomatic largelin, was the nameura patient. It was this sector of an ourselve unpaneaut ourselve that Central Cadoma elected to attack while looked topon with some dubiety among the that we have been searched to standar report and assess upon trial some through the building the outlies of the Trentino, a house foreign offices of the Allies, but was assented assuing the contract of the assumed a sound and assumed assume

Autraus, butter are tanage and anomaly active only treat are represent to the Hingarian strike could meet on equal Cambon, and M. Szzonoff) & Secret President and Associated Marks are delicated as Tasks considerable for active and the considerable for account of the considerable for ac angemen states come meas on eyes common, san in second a common state i the state of the s occurs an annual of the final o discount to the blesk Garno, commanding at a great deal of recinimation, as well as of incummentations. The frentine select had position at this juncture would be decisive. communications. And a regions seems not pleasant as the process of the state of the of a large number of picked soldiers, and General Cadoma deployed the Inlien Third

Army on the right bank of the Isonzo. on an altogether different complexion, They Italian troops crossed the river and secured were, in the first place, attacked by the bridge-heads at Caporetto (the scene of Austrians, and having repelled the attack. subsequent Italian disasters in 1917), Plava, assumed the offensive in their turn, and by Castelnuovo, Gradisca, and Monfalcone, on the autumn stood east of Gorizia and masters the coast.

defences proved strong enough to hold up with which the Italians fought in the heights any immediate Italian advance. The posi- of the Trentino. They worked on the edge tions had been fortified with great skill, and of avalanches; their supplies were brought the southern extremity of the line was on wire cables; their guns were dragged buttressed by the Carso plateau. The with incredible labour to the heights; their Italians gained a footing on it in July, but its fighting was often done with the thermometer complete subjugation was the necessary pre- below zero. It was from the wedge-shaped liminary to any Italian advance into the Trentino that General Conrad von Hoetzen-Istrian plain, or of an attack on Gorizia, the dorff designed to launch an attack that would pivot of the Isonzo defences from the south, cut the Italian communications, inhibit an The Italian attempts to rush these strong offensive which General Cadoma was prepositions proved abortive, and thence- paring on the Isonzo, and, if completely sucforward, when the cost of assaulting them cessful, find a way to the Venetian plains. had proved to be prohibitive, the warfare The plan found no favour at German Headsettled down, as on the Western Front, to quarters, and was a disagreeable surprise to siege operations.

closed down the fighting, was occupied by Hoetzendorff from its prosecution by finally give - and - take operations in which the demanding the heaviest Austrian artillery for Italian offensive, though continually en- use on the Meuse. All remonstrance, howcouraged by slight gains in the Trentino ever, proved in vain; and on the 14th of May salient and on the Isonzo front, could boast the Austrian General Staff informed German no greater achievement than those already Head-quarters that, weather permitting, they recorded, together with the useful service intended to launch an attack on the Tyrol of occupying the attention of a considerable front from the Adige to the Sugana valley.

eastern front, a large proportion of these were been detained by snow, began, Serbo-Croats, or Jugo-Slavs, who had been The Austro-Hungarian command had in persuaded to the view that they were fight- the Trentino 18 divisions of first-class ing against the Italians in defence of their troops, including many trained to mountain national territory. The failure of Italy to warfare; and other units in reserve. This accomplish more in this first year was in the army was supplied with 2000 guns, half of greatest degree to be attributed to her lack them of not less than medium calibre; with of guns and shells; something more is to be 20 batteries of 12-inch guns, two to a attributed to the anomalous position in which battery; four 15-inch guns, and two of the she stood by not having declared war against monster Skoda mortars of 16% inch. It Germany, a fact to be laid to the door of the is plain that General von Hoetzendorff conparadoxical politics of the country, some of templated the possibility of some such whose politicians did not want the war at all, smashing advance as Mackensen had made Others, such as the Socialists, protested in Galicia. The conditions, however, were against the extension of Italy's liabilities by very different, and the Italian soldiery were the declaration of war against Bulgaria at this period inspired by the greatest (roth October).

In 1016 the Italians' share in the war took

at last of the Carso. No praise can be too Along this 30-mile front the Austrian high for the devotion, ability, and ingenuity the Chief of the General Staff, von Falken-The rest of the year, till an early winter havn, who tried to deter Count Conrad you proportion of the Austro-Hungarian armies. On the next day the attack, for which the It is to be noted that on the Isonzo, or troops had been ready for six weeks, but had

enthusiasm. There was no question of

Von Falkenhayn's Memoirs (Hutchinson, 1919).

finding their moral sapped. The position of the Italian front in the Trentino was, had sunk back almost as far as it was safe nevertheless, not good. It cut across the to withdraw it; and the Austrians now made V-shaped Trentino in a concave loop, of their first attempt to pierce the sagging line which roughly one extremity rested on the where it hung by its person the flanks. They Val Lagarina, and the other on the Val had attacked at Coni Zugna and Pasubio, Sugana. The Austrians could not force and had pushed into the smaller left-hand their way directly along these main valleys: loop as far as Chiese, so that if they got a their effort was directed, firstly, at pressing little farther they could take Pasubio flank the middle of the loop backwards so as to and rear. If, secondly, they got through make it sag more, and, secondly, at cutting the Buole Pass, then Coni Zugna must through the loop where it rested on the similarly go, and on the west a way would valleys so as to outflank them.

Italian troops, but when it became clear that lavished men. At the same time they the Austrians intended a drive on a great pressed the right-hand loop hard, and thus scale, he was replaced in the command of though, on its eastern extremity, it had been the First Italian Army by General Pecori- withdrawn lower down the Val Sugana to a Giraldi, to whom was given the task of more defensible position, it was hard beset, strengthening the flanks at the Val Lagarina while the sector next to it, nearer to the and the Val Sugana. Before the centre centre, had to struggle night and day to keep could also be strengthened the Austrian its feet on the Setti Comuni table-land. It attack began-with a bombardment (14th was pushed back, in spite of all its efforts May) over a 30-mile front, and with the for four days, the 25th to the 28th inclusive. heavy guns playing on the communications. The Italian line, under this compulsion of objective of the Coni Zugna, the Buole gun-fire, moved back at its centre, but held Pass, and for Pasubio, culminated. The resolutely on the strengthened flanks at Austrians spent 7000 men in the attempt Zugna and Borgo. On the 15th and 16th on the pass and failed, and though they did the Austrians began to move forward by not relinquish their efforts to shell the (a) Rovereto and the Vall'arsa to Chiese and Italians from their rocky trenches on Schio: (b) from the Folgaria plateau down Pasubio, and attacked them unceasingly from the Astico valley to Arsiero; (c) from the three sides, the incessant small expenditure Lavarone plateau down the Val d'Assa to was useless, when the large effort had failed. Asiago. On the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, On the same day as the western attack on fighting was continuous. The ridge at the Buole Pass, a corresponding attack was Zuena had to be given up, and the whole of made on the east. The Italians had two the middle of the loop was pushed back till days before (28th) been forced back to the it ran from the Coni Zugna over the Pasubio southern rim of the table-land of the Setti massif, and thence, still unstable, north of Comuni. On the 30th Monte Cimone, the Val Posina and the Setti Comuni table- dominating Arsiero (which, with Asiago, land to the Val Sugana. General Cadorna had been abandoned), was taken, and the now ordered the centre of the line to be Austrians assaulted the ridge standing drawn right back from the costly and un- between them and the plains. On 1st June tenable positions which it was striving to an Austrian Army Order announced that hold, and after a four days' fighting retreat only one mountain intervened between their it was south of Asiago, and had been con- troops and the Venetian plain, and still their verted from a single loop into a double one, advance had not been arrested. with the Pasubio manif at the junction. But at this date the worst of the danger The right-hand (eastern) loop tipped up was well over, for the reinforcement of the northwards after crossing the Val d'Assa Fifth Army, which had been organized for till it reached the Val Sugana.

he opened to the plains. In the attempts General Brusati was in command of the to achieve these advances the Austrians On the 30th the struggle for the triple

25th May was a critical day: the centre

action on the Isonzo front by Cadorna, but

for a strategic reason.

which he had called up when the full as if to turn the Carso block. The real intention of the Austrian High Command attack, heralded by a scarehing and heavy was revealed, was now coming up and would bombardment on 6th August, was directed shortly be in a position for counter-attack; at the Sabotino block and the San Michele and preparations began for it on and June. height, the northern pillar of the Carso. Ten Cadorna did not believe that the enemy divisions took part in it; and the excellent could break through his line, and rightly artillery preparation simplified the capture took into consideration the fact that since of the Austrian first lines. A column under the Austrian blow had failed at the time of Colonel Badoglio carried the defences of its preatest momentum in the first fortnight. Oslavia, and the whole position of the Saboit could never again raise a sufficient head tino height followed. In the open country of power while served only by the single line below it the trenches between Podgora and of railway supporting it. Consequently, for the Isonzo were overrun. The right wing another fortnight, he contented himself with of the attack did equally well, breaking sustaining their continued assaults, and on through the trench defences of Monte San 15th, 16th, and 17th June the last attack on Michele, and earrying another line souththe southern rim of the Setti Comuni table- wards to San Martino. Finally, by a very land flickcred out, while Cadorna lighted dashing development of the feint attack of a new flame with his own counter-attack, two days before, a Bersaglieri evelist-bat-But this was not pushed very vigorously talion got a footing on the heights above Monfalcone, and stayed there. With the The Italian Commander-in-Chief had Sabotino outlier and Monte San Michele in other designs for the locality of the blow their hands the Italians commanded Gorizia, which he proposed to strike at the enemy, But though they could deny it to the enemy, and was not to be moved from his own plan there were three days of close and bloody of an attack on the Isonzo front by any fighting to be done in elearing its subsidiary prospect of eapturing men or guns in the defences. It was not till 10th August that difficult country of the Trentino mountains. the Due d'Aosta was able to ride into the The roads by which his army could have town at the head of his Italian Third Army,

advanced were at least as difficult for him. The eapture of Gorizia was a great feat. as for the better-armed retreating Austrians, and one which exhibited the Italian military and he preferred the appearance of a lively power at its best. It had the moral effect activity on their front while they sullenly of converting Italy to a complete belief in retreated-an army hors de combat in the the war, and it was a great personal triumph Trentino valleys-to a wasteful attempt to for General Cadorna, whose difficulties, harry them. Their absence from any political as well as military, had been extheatre of war was a useful asset to the treme. He lost no time in following up Allies, and Russia, by the agency of Brus- his success; and the energy with which the siloff's attack in Galicia, turned it to good Austrians were able to counter-attack was account. Cadorna turned to the renewal a token of the extent to which at this period of his preparations to strike on the eastern of the war they had rallied their Croatian front. By the first week in August he was and Bosnian subjects to their cause. Cadorna's task was only begun. The Austrians The Austro-Hungarian front which he still held strong mountainous positions from attacked was commanded by General Boro- Monte San Gabriele to San Marco, east of viec (Fifth Austro-Hungarian Army), whose Gorizia, and could enfilade any Italian command extended from the Adriatic to advance towards them by means of their Tolmino, 25 miles north of Gorizia, where artillery on the Bainsizza plateau to the it linked with General Rohr's Tenth Army. north. South of Gorizia the task of making Gorizia was the centre of the attacked posi- a way across the honey-combed, waterless tion. The first assault of the Italian Third Carso, with its elaborate fortifications, was Army was a feint attack towards Monfalcone, hardly less arduous. By the 11th the

Carso was secured, and on that day the Austria engaged, General Cadorna had been Italians, crossing the deep gash of the Val- able to hold the forces of General von Hoetlone, carried the height of Nod Logem be- zendorff on the one flank, while striking at yond it. They continued to push forward General Borovice on the other. But now as far as Monte Pecinka, which they reached only two plans, neither very good, were open. by the middle of August, when the move-ment, regarded as a whole, concluded. It time, with all the weight which Italy could had captured since 4th August 10,000 pris- compass, in the plain which led from Gorizia oners, 30 big guns, 63 trench mortars, and to Laibach; the other was to withdraw from oz machine-guns.

not, as in the preceding year, suspend active have been assured of success if General Cadoperations. From mid-August to mid- orna had been in possession of a much larger September the reduction of the Carso posi- weight of artillery; the second plan was detions proceeded steadily; it would have sirable politically because of its influence on progressed a great deal faster had Cadoma the races in the south-east of Austria, whose been well supplied with heavy artillery, and loyalty to the Hapsburgs was doubtful, and an ample reserve of shells. He had neither, whom it was hoped might be induced to Nevertheless, the San Grado position, north- revolt against their masters. The hope east, was taken, enabling the Italians to steal would have been better founded had the down in to the plain which it overlooked to- intentions of Italy with regard to the eastern wards the Vipacco River, the line of which coast of the Adriatic been less ambiguous. was turned by a surprise attack on 10th. In the upshot neither plan was adopted; October. This was the prelude to a more but a middle course of a limited offensive was considerable attack on the northern part taken. This began in May with an attempt of the Carso at the beginning of November, to secure command of the roads leading to which, in conjunction with an attack from Trieste. great.

lapse of Roumania, and there seemed no Italian 7th Army Corps, by storming the reason why the whole weight of the Austro-Hungarian military power should not fall seed artillery. VOL VZ

northern end of the Gorizian section of the on the Italians. While Russia had kept the awkward positions on the Carso and act Autumn and the approach of winter did on the defensive. The first plan could only

the Vipacco sector, cleared eventually all General Cadorna's plan was ingenious. the minor heights of the Carso down to that He began by a heavily-prepared attack on the river as far as Height 126. The additions Austrian positions north of Gorizia covering to the number of prisoners in the autumn and the Bainsizza plateau. He attacked for five early winter fighting amounted to 16,000 days, methodically capturing Monte Kuk, men, a number almost as great as that taken Monte Vodice, and securing a good bridgein the opening phases of Cadorna's most able head at Bodrez. The operations, which counter-thrust. When the dimensions of extended over a considerable front, captured the resources, the difficulties of the positions 6000 prisoners. Having thus drawn the assailed, and the resistance of the enemy attention of the Austrians to this northern infantry are taken into account, the magni- wing of his attack, Cadorna put the second tude of the success appears, and was, very part into execution, sending the Third Army into action on a wide front south of Gorizia Two events had great influence on the from Faitihrib to the coast. The preliminary course of the campaign in 1917, the first hombardment was shortened to a violent that Italy declared war on Germany on 28th ten hours to impart surprise to the move-August, a step openly approved by all except ment; and British monitors1 bombarded the the Socialist party; the second, the Russian Monfalcone sector from the sea. The Third Revolution, which freed Austria-Hungary Army took 9000 prisoners in the first advance from many anxieties on the Galician front. and 1000 on the second day. The forward These had been further lessened by the col- movement was resumed on the 25th, and the

heights between Medeazza and Flondar, opened the way for the subjugation of the Hermada block which dominated the coast road to Trieste. But, though the Italians, by hard fighting, won ground and another 5000 prisoners, they could not move fast enough to win a way to their goal before the Austrian reserves were thrown into the counter-attack. They got no farther than Medeazza, from which they threatened to turn the Hermada heights, and Medeazza they could not keep in its entirety. They kept the ground won in the northern attack at the foot of the Bainsizza plateau, and counted 24,000 prisoners from first to last: but their own losses, in an enterprise which towards the end became the usual give-andtake fighting, could not have been greatly inferior to those of the enemy. The total casualty list of the Italians, including killed and missing, was 130,000. That of the Austrians may have been about the same; they had the preliminary advantage of depositions.

There were in June, 1917, a few actions in the Trentino, small but costly in proportion to the numbers engaged. The Austrian retreat after von Hoetzendorff's failure had not abandoned all the good or threatening positions, one of which, between the Val Brenta and the Vall'arsa, would be useful in any renewed attack on Asiago. This position, part of which rested on Monte Ortigara. a slight one.

The incident made very little difference to the tenacity with which other soldiers of the Third Army, notably the Grenadier Brigade, resisted the Austrian counter-attacks during June. But it was a disagreeable symptom of a new spirit in the Italian army; and it might have been better if the Commanderin-Chief, General Cadorna, had noted it, and taken measures earlier to counteract it. The feeling was, in part, the war weariness which fell on all the belligerents; it was in part due to political causes-the conflict between those who dreamt of a Greater Italy dominating the Adriatic, or those who, like the Socialists, denounced the war altogether, or those who, steering a middle course, designed to fish in troubled waters. It is certain that the seeds of disaffection began to ripen in some sections of the Italian armies in the summer, and they were ripe for gathering in the autumn. At any rate, that is what von Falkenhavn and Ludendorff, who knew the circumstances in which the great Gerfending well-armoured and well-gunned man-Austrian attack was loosed in October, have implied.

Before this attack took place General Cadorna adopted a way of his own of stiffening his troops by delivering yet another attack on the main Austrian front. This attack had been considered at a Paris Conference (25th July), and Cadorna had asked for it a considerable reinforcement of guns and munitions-for lack of which the Mav-June attack had been suspended. Generals was assailed on 18th June by order of the Haig and Pétain at that time had their own local Italian commander. The height was hands full, and could not accede to any captured; the Alpini who took it-and with weakening of their resources till after the it the Austrian battalion defending it-hung Franco-British campaigning season. That on to their gains for a fortnight, and then would have been too late for Cadorna in were shelled nearly to annihilation before Italy; and the half measure of a limited being driven out by a counter-attack. It offensive was decided on. This began on was an episode which reflected the highest 18th August with a bombardment from credit on the brayery of the Italian soldiers. Tolmino to the sea, and differed in plan from but very little on the general in command, its predecessors. Cadorna's intention being This incident was one of several which led of no greater subtlety than that of ramming to the enlargement of dissatisfaction among in his reserves wherever the first attacks the rank and file. A symptom of this dis- should disclose enemy weakness. The insatisfaction revealed itself in a refusal of a fantry followed the bombardment on 19th newly-arrived infantry brigade in the August, and the Austrians, apparently, had Faitihrib-Hermada sector to fight. If that expected the heaviest weight of assault to fall is an exaggeration of their attitude it is only on the Carso and on the Hermada front, since that was the most obvious way to progress in both these sectors, and in so for henceforth their difficulties increased doing confirmed the Austrian surmise. The with every step. The plateau had no roads Third Army reached the line at Medeazza, by which they could cross it; they must which they had been unable to hold in June, build them, and in the meantime must manand once again the heights of Hermada were handle every piece of artillery with ropes. pounded by British monitors and Italian. The advance reached its limit by 27th siege-guns on pontoons. On the Carso, August at Volnik, a hill 2 miles from the near Selo, the Italian Grenadiers wiped out Chiapovono valley, where the Austrians the 12th Austrian Division; and on the more were well prepared to hold up an attack till portherly terraces of the Carso, above the their guns could be removed. Vipacco River, some little progress was made against very dense enemy resistance.

sectors north of Gorizia, the long line of the dominant heights abutting on the searching assault had found a weak spot near entrance to the Gorizia plain and dominatthe Playa hridge-head. The Italians seized ing the Gorizian Carso. On the Southern the valley which divided Monte Kuk from the Carso the struggle for positions went on Bainsizza plateau, and entirely deceived the during the larger part of September, and defenders as to the points where it was in- late in the month the Italians improved their tended to cross the Isonzo. Those selected line in the south-eastern corner of the were the least ohvious ones, and unlikely Bainsizza plateau; but the autumn campaign crossings were effected by letting down ropes proper ceased by the second week of Sepand swarming across. Thus, in the morning tember with General Cadorna's publication mists of the 10th, a considerable force was of a schedule of the Italian gains, which on the farther side of the river at Jelenik, comprised upwards of 30,000 prisoners and ready to seize the first line of Austrian 140 guns, of which 80 were guns of position. trenches. Later in the day, while the second This was good work, and in ordinary lines were delaying further advance by circumstances would have been regarded machine-gun fire, two Bersaglieri hrigades as a most valuable contribution to the dashed across farther north towards Bodrez, common cause of the Allies. But the and not round the northern rim of the Bain- operations had been very costly; they had sizza plateau above Vrh. Here was the real carried no decision with them; and in the break, and the Italians, coming down north revival of the forces and resources of the from Vrh, outflanked the Austrians at Central Powers they had become perilous, Jelenik, and then put one northern sour of Their cost in casualties, little short of the Bainsizza plateau into Italian possession. 150,000, added to those which had been

Trieste. The Italians did, indeed, make the most heartening moment of their drive.

Thenceforward the last offensive of General Cadorna resolved itself into very But in the less numerously-defended capable, very methodical attempts to reduce

A more important northern spur, divided sustained in the earlier campaigns of the nominally into the Kal and Lom plateaux, year, invited counter-attack, if the Central commands Santa Lucia and the bridge-head Powers could undertake it. Austriaat Tolmino. The Italians made some Hungary, kept together only by fear, and headway over the difficult country, but did always in danger of the revolt of some of not pursue the enterprise; it might have her component races, had generally shown been a useful insurance if they had done so, itself incapable of any sustained counter-They pursued, instead, their gains south- attack. But German Head-quarters, which wards and eastwards over the main Bain- had so pointedly refused countenance to sizza plateau; and to them fell many con- Count von Hoetzendorff's Trentino camspicuous gains. From Monte Kuk and paign in 1916, were impelled, partly hy Vodice they went to conquer Monte Kobelik, military and partly hy political reasons, and on 24th August, took Monte Santo, its to give assistance in 1917. They chose garrison and gun caverns, which they had the time when the Italian armies were temhammered fruitlessly so long. This was porarily exhausted; they chose the place for well placed either to resist or to retire slowly, not be lost The Italian command had not but where there was a weakness in the line, expected that an attack could be made in and they chose the method of attack

and about the Tolmino bridge head at the enemy columns were on them with all the north of the unconquered Kal and Lom impact of surprise, and these columns were spuis of the Bainsizza plateau His Third Army, which was his best, was deeply sunk in the Gorizia Carso sector His Second Army held a long thin line from the Bunsizza plateru northwards, but had never conquered the Tolmino bridge head, which was a position of great natural strength. because here the river makes a right angled turn so that it encloses a hilly triangular tract filled by the Santa Lucia and Santa Mana hills It would have been a costly position to take, and the Italians, though expending several attacks on it, had never made i serious attempt on it. The German strate gists saw both its strength and the joint in the Italian defences which it formed They began to assemble divisions to attack it, before Haig, on the Iraneo British front, had ceased attacking Passchendaele The Italians could not remun ignorant of the concentration, but did not apprehend an overpowering danger though they were a little dubious about their artillery strength What should have given greater cause for dubiety was the moral of certain units of and farther south, also on the Bainsizza the Italian Second Army They had been undermined by propaganda, and General held or retired in good order. It seemed to Cadorna was not wholly unaware of this General Cadorna, when the reports reached peril from within. In the second place in him, as if no more than a local reverse had meeting the attack of 10 picked German been sustained, though General Capello, divisions under General von Below, which the man on the spot,1 thought otherwise, had all the experience of the Western Front and advised a general withdrawal of the behind them, together with all the prestige, line The Germans had, in effect, pierced efficiency, and ingenuity of the German the Itulian first line and second line at military method, the Italian troops were Caporetto and at Vodil Vrh. and were exposed to something of which they had no surging forward from the Tolmino budgeconception

obviated any loss of direction through a fog by sending forward men closely packed the ere of the buttle

attack, which was not where Cadorna was in deep formations, so that the way could such conditions, and their own guns were The weakness in Cadorna's line was above impotent for counter buttery work. The driven into the Italian positions like nails, and without any regard to the losses sustuned by the attackers The 4th Corps of the Second Italian Army, which was not an experienced one, was cut up, its artillery was out of action almost from the first. parth owing to the surprise, parth owing to incapacity to grasp the situation on the part of its commander At the northernmost positions the Austro German drive was temporarily held, on the remaining front of the 4th Corps down to Vodil. north west of Tolmino, most serious gaps were made and widened Below the 4th Corps, covering Tolmino, was part of the 7th Corps and the 27th, from Santa Lucia to the Auscel valley This front the Austro Germans assuled from the Tolmino bridgehead, breaking through the first lines in the mist as they had done farther north, and storming the height of Globocak Here, at any rate, there was no panic and

no faltering Globocal was retaken by a Bersaglieri brigade (5th, General Boriani) spurs, the Italian line, where attacked, either head Moreover, they were only just begin-The attack was pushed after six days' ming, and it did not matter that they were registering fire, and after a violent bombard- held up here and there. They were adoptment of the most searching kind on the ing in a crude form the method enjoined on night of 23rd-24th October, from Plezzo to' German attacking units in the later Cambraibelow Tolmino It was pushed in a way. St Quentin battle of 1918, namely, to act afterwards to become notorious, which independently, pushing any advantage for



REAR-ADMIRAL SIR R. J. KEYES, K.C.B. From a photograph by Rentell & Son



COMMODORE SIR Y. TYRWHITT, K.C.B.

From a phoney aph by Heard, Plymouth



ADMIRAL SIMS, UNITED STATES NAVY
From a phingraph by Secury & Co.



GENERAL PERSHING, COMMANDING THE UNITED STATES ARMY IN FRANCE From a pleitgraph by Resull & Sons



fanwise, were greatest, and it was here that lieri at Globocak) to hold them. The dis-

what it was worth, and going past obstacles place of General Capello, to make another which held up units on their right or left. effort to stem the tide. It was impossible On the 28th they developed these tactics to do so. The Second Army's left wing no with increasing weight behind their spear- longer existed; and its conquerors were heads. Especially they exploited them at streaming down the western tributaries of the Tolmino hridge-head, where their base the Isonzo into the plain, despite all the of attack, and the possibilities of spreading efforts of brave units (such as the Bersagthe germ of dislocation grew to disaster, aster had left the Third Army unaffected. The Germans and Austrians poured for- as well as the right wing of the Second Army. ward, and the Italian troops fell hack ulti- from Monte Kuk to south of Gorizia. But motely in such disorder that they entangled the farther the German-Austrian forces



their own reserves coming up on the packed penetrated into the plain the more certain to advance or retreat, till the moment arrived when there seemed no safety but in flight. a general retreat to the Piave line on the

roads. The Germans skilfully made use of it was that these would be outflanked and the disorder, even to the extent of sending their communications imperilled, while the in their own men in Italian uniforms, and Fourth Army, holding the long tenuous line converted it into a permanent and inextric- which bent round like the letter A to the able confusion, in which none knew whether Trentino salient, was similarly endangered. Cadorna lost no more time. He ordered

Such was the hreak-through at Caporetto, evening of 26th October. General Capello with the disaster of Tolmino, in its inception. had suggested the Tagliamento line, but The breach was certain to widen. General it was too late for that, and the line was too Capello, with an unwelcomed prescience, weak and too long. There were subsequent prepared a withdrawal of the most wholesale moments when a retreat much farther west kind, averring with perfect frankness that seemed to he indicated. But Cadorna was his left wing was gone. The Commander- well aware that retrest beyond the Piave in-Chief ordered General Montuori, in the line would imply not merely the sacrifice of

and he was content with the lesser expecta- the pursuing enemy. tion of being able to rest on the Piave if he

armies played their part, a heroic one, and vears could not have been made.

One such post maintained itself in the Cadore me tains for a year; another detachment died to the last man on Monte Nero.

Venice, but, what was of much greater im- they staved off the defeat of Italy. On 15th portance, the abandonment of any practic- November the retreat was becoming orderly able naval base in the Adriatic. His deci- on the line of the Tagliamento; by 8th Nosion was on both sides of the question the vember the bulk of the Italian armies were right one, though the Duc d'Aosta (Third across the Piave, and the Fourth Army had Army) and General di Robilant (Fourth bridged the gap between the First Army Army) hoped that they would have been and the Third. The 6th and 8th Corps allowed to hold on to their positions in the of the Second Army had been joined to the expectation that the German-Austrian drive Duc d'Aosta's command. On oth and 10th would exhaust itself. Cadorna did not November the Italians definitely established believe that the Second Army would rally, themselves on the Piave line, and turned on

On 4th November an Allied conference could galvanize his troops into resistance, was held at Rapallo, and attended by mem-The Order of the Day in which he denounced bers of the British and French War Cabinets. the units of the Second Army who had let and by military representatives of Great the enemy through was galvanic enough. Britain, France, and Italy. It was the first It was fiercely resented, but it did its work. of such monthly meetings, and, as the result The decision did not alter the critical of its deliberations, General Cadorna was character of the situation. The three intact transferred to this Council, his place as corps of the Second Army (2nd, 6th, and Commander - in - Chief being taken by 8th), and the whole of the Third Army, had General Diaz. General Diaz assumed no to retreat along a narrow corridor of plain easy task. The Austro-Hungarian army faster than an unimpeded enemy could get began to test his lines of defence immediround the heads of their northernmost re- ately, not only along the Piave line but along treating columns. The Fourth Army had the old one occupied by the First Army to edge its way back along a difficult country through the Trentino, as well as from its on the north of the invaders; and in between junction at Monte Tomatico with the Piave, these two joint retreats was a hurrying crowd The Italians were compelled to revise their of fugitives, civilians and soldiers, with the line between the Brenta and the Piave, advancing Germans and Austrians at their abandoning Asiago (oth November), and heels. The retreat of the unbroken frag- Monte Lisser on the Brenta, and Monte ments of the Second Army and the Third Tomatico on the Piave (15th November). Army was one of the epics of the war. Its The Austro-German attack was not yet gallantry, its devotion, its sacrifice, the ended here, and was continued with deterstands it made, the triumphs over blunders mination for five days longer; but when in detail which it achieved, will be always almost at their last gasp the Italians on the as great in Italian military history as the Monfenara ridge crushed the culminating victories it won before and afterwards in attack of a German Jager battalion on 21st happier conditions. On them fell the brunt November, and thereafter barred the way of the German efforts to make the disaster to the plain. Similar devoted resistance which had befallen Italian arms irremediable. held the line half-way between the Brenta They stood up to it and beat the danger and Piave, and Monte Solarolo and Monte back. It is only by the side of their achieve- Spinoncia, during the closing days of Noment that the difficulties of the Fourth Army, vember. It will be perceived that winter often fighting in isolated and almost for- was late in coming, and this favoured the gotten posts and detachments1 in the hilly German-Austrian command in one more country, seem less than immense. Both attempt in December, which in ordinary

> In the winter struggle, which began on 4th December, under the direction of General Krobatin (General von Below had

returned to France), the British divisions after the German successes on the Cambraiunder General the Earl of Cavan were put St. Quentin front, and on the plain of the into the Italian line at Montello, and the Lys, the Austrians consented to co-operate assault was preceded by a bombardment of the new kind, and was made on a 7-mile front between Monte Sisemol and Monte Badenecchi, its greatest weight being thrown on the latter. Both Monte Badenecchi and Monte Castelgomberto were lost, and it appeared as if a way might be cut down the Frenzela River towards the old key position of Valstagna. Another attack launched by General Krobatin on 11th-12th December gave him more elbow-room by the capture of Monte Spinoncia, and ultimately of Monte Asolone. But all these operations were not only costly, but were drawn out much too long to admit of their being exploited. The Italians were merely being driven from mountain to mountain. It was not till 22nd December that General Krobatin could make another attempt on the Frenzela valley. It captured prisoners, but it failed of its object, and when Christmas came, with the long-belated snow to put an end to operations, the Italians, in spite of their losses in

this defensive warfare, were safe. Their front remained quiescent for a very long time, though they were never free from anxiety, and there was always the possibility that the spring of 1918 would find Italy selected as the anvil for a great German hammer-blow. That blow fell instead on the British armies in France and Flanders, and, despite all the expostulations of German Head-quarters, the Austro-Hungarian High Command could not be induced to put all their strength into another attempt to crush the Italian front. Their reluctance was due less to want of will than to uncertainty of their ability. By the Pact of Corfu¹ Italian statesmanship had discounted a great deal of the Jugo-Slav distrust of Italy's foreign policy, and the subject races of the Eastern Adriatic hinterland were no longer to be depended on to fight for the Habsburg of Asiago, rendered a very good account monarchy. They were, in the year 1918, could not be depended on to fight. But

with their Allies by striking one more blow at the Italian front. It was undertaken under the direction of a new commander,

General von Arz opened with a rather foolish attempt to divert attention by an assault on the Tonale valley positions on the western side of the Trentino wedge. It entirely failed, and cost him a division without in any way unsettling the plans of General Diaz. There is reason to believe that General Diaz had a quite adequate knowledge of his opponent's intentions, in which the real attack was to be on a 46-mile front along the Piave, and extending across the mountain positions between the Piave and the Brenta. The general plan was to pin General Diaz to the Lower and Middle Piave, while turning his line on either side of the shoulder-line where the Piave emerges from the mountain and curves round the great Montello ridge. The chief arrows of the Austrian attack were directed at (1) the Montello shoulder; (2) the Monfenara ridge and the adjoining salient with Monte Grappa; (3) the roads of the Frenzela on the one side of the Brenta, and by Monte Asolone on the

other to Valstagna; (4) the positions guarding the Asiago rim. The Austrian forces began to mass under the command of General von Scheuchenstuel for the wide frontal attack in the hill region between Asiago and Montello on 13th June, and refrained from bombardment in order to gain the advantage of surprise. But General Diaz, well aware of their intention, opened a withering counter-bombardment on their massing formations on 14th June, so that when the frontal attack opened on 15th June not only had the "surprise" been lost, but the assault itself had been badly shaken. The British forces of 2 divisions often in a state of open mutiny, and, unless divisions advancing against them, and be-(23rd and 45th), in the Cesuna section west terrorized by the guns at their own backs, lieving that their bombardment had silenced of themselves. The 4 Austro-Hungarian the British front line, were caught in the curtain-fire of the defence, and only at one

battalion. Here the fighting was hard, but 'the river under a smoke-screen at Nervesa. by nightfall the Austrian attack had been and stormed the height from two sides. rolled back. On the right of the British, Their two assaulting divisions met on the below Monte Sisemol, the enemy attack had summit, and, uniting, tried to sweep the a different, but equally disastrous, experience, ridge from west to east. Other Austrian against the French divisions, which elastic- attacks were made to divert attention lower ally recoiled in order to draw the attacking down the Piave at Monte de Piave, at the masses into the zone of fire of the French Zenson loop, and in the lagoon sector. field artillery. While the complicated General Diaz was not deceived. He devoted Austrian imitation of a new style of German all his attention to the southern side of the attack was staggering under this fire, the Montello ridge below Nervesa, preferring French came back at them, and here, too, von Scheuchenstuel's divisions completely failed.

This wing operation was, however, part only of yon Scheuchenstuel's attack with the main body of the 11th Austro-Hungarian army astride the Frenzela valley. This was repelled with greater difficulty by the Italians. helped by the French, and the fighting went on till next morning before the defenders could take breath. Between the Brenta and the Piave the Italian Fourth Army had to bridges across the flood. defend Monte Grappa on the one wing, the Monfenara ridge on the other. The Austrians had brought up their heaviest guns to blast a way through, and a torrent of high

is little depth in the water. After a heavy casualties were fewer than 40,000.

point came to grips with a Bucks and Oxford night's bombardment the Austrians crossed even to give ground on the northern side of the ridge than there. He was right. The Austrians could not sweep the ridge; they became entangled in its entrenchments, and could go neither forward nor back. Their attack failed; and suddenly the weather intervened to their discomfiture. thunderstorm swept down the hills, raised the Piave to flood, and cut them off from their supports. They were penned; and the Italian gunners and aviators smashed the

The Austrian High Command made a desperate effort to relieve the situation by increasing pressure on the Middle Piave, and General Wurm, by exercising the greatest explosives and gas-shells was poured in the pressure, won a strong and long bridge-head Italian positions. It was nobly sustained: there. He had to bring up Hungarian troops it had to be, for there was little room for to do so, and these were assailed in turn by retreat; and the way in which the subsequent the Italian shock-troops, the Arditi, whom Austrian infantry attack was met was General Diaz was now in a position to spare. creditable not only to Italian bravery but to The river was coming down in strong flood, the cool calculation of its leadership. The swollen by snows, and carrying pine trees Austrians were infiltrated by the Italian which swept away the bridges. The plight reserves before they could consolidate their of General Wurm's Hungarians, as well as positions, and swept back, and the outflank- that of the unfortunate division marooned ing manœuvre about Monte Grappa neutral- on the Montello, grew steadily worse; and ized. Much of the ground was recovered on 20th June the Emperor Carl presided over by ingenious and perfectly-timed counter- a Council of War at which it was determined attack, and by the end of the day the Aus- to cut the losses and withdraw as soon as trians here had been fought to a standstill, possible. A fall of the river enabled the These attacks, despite their severity, were withdrawal to be made on the night of subsidiary (as were those on the Lower 25-26th June before General Diaz could Piave) to the attempt on the Montello ridge. bring up enough divisions for a counter-The ridge, 7 miles long, which had been attack, so that the attackers escaped the full fortified by General Plumer during its earlier penalty for their failure. Nevertheless, occupation by the British divisions, rises their offensive powers by it were entirely formidably above the plain of the Piave, broken; and in the various sectors of repulse The river washes its base; but in June there they had lost 200,000 men. The Italian

The moral disintegration of the armies Fifth eastwards, and interrupting the comopposed to General Diaz proceeded apace munications of the Sixth Army. Meanwhile in the weeks that followed, but it was not the Fourth Italian Army was to take the safe to reckon on it while Germany was offensive on the old battle-ground of Asiago undefeated; and it is to be remembered and Monte Grappa. 1018, the British Cabinet was by no means 24th October with a display of furious assured that the German collapse was at energy, and was pushed so vigorously that hand. There was every reason, therefore, the Austrian lines were penetrated northwhy General Diaz should refrain, with his west of Monte Grappa. The Austrians own comparatively unaided forces, from reacted with a vigour which increased on embarking on a counter-attack against the the 25th, by which time the main battle had



g the disposition of the Italian and Allaed armies at the beginning and continuance of the attack on 24th October and following days

Austro-Hungarian forces. But about the been joined on the Piave. In this action and Sixth Austrian Armies, driving the Italian Corps, already in position, secretly

end of September, General Foch communi- the movements of the Tenth (Italo-British), cated to the Italian Commander-in-Chief Eighth, and Twelfth Armies were cohis own hopes and expectations about the ordinated under General Caviglia, comsituation in France, and before 7th October, manding the Eighth Army; and the Tenth General Diaz had recast his plans in order Army (General Lord Cavan) formed the to assume an offensive in which a distin- arrow-head of the thrust. This was the guished part was to be taken by the three first to cross the Piave-no easy task, for British divisions (7th, 23rd, 48th) under its width at the selected point was a mile and Lord Cavan. The blow was for a main a half, with a swift stream which a flood on attack, consisting of an advance across the the eye of the assault brought to a torrent. Piave with the Tenth Army (mixed Italo- Opposite Cavan's army was an island, the British, commanded by General Lord Cavan) Grave di Papadopoli, in mid-stream, occuand the Eighth and Twelfth Italian Armies. pied by the enemy as an advance post. This was to drive a wedge between the Fifth Cavan's own forces consisted of the 11th strengthened as the hour of assault drew reintorcements were not to be got across the concentrated at Treviso

The flood on the Prave was an unwelcome addition to the problem the British had to solve, but it was converted into a gain by a suggestion emenating from General Babington, commanding the 14th Corps, that the island Grave di Papadopoli should be rushed before the main attack was begun This was done on the night of 23rd-24th October, and was an adventure of great peril, carried out with noteworthy skill, organization, and determination The Austrians were so completely surprised that part of the garrison was caught asleep. The buttalions which had taken it (without any artillery preparation) were heavily shelled for 48 hours, while the conquest of the island was completed by the 7th British and the 37th Italian Divisions Thus the main channel of the Prave was put behind the Tenth Army, and enabled it to get over bridging materials for the passage of the narrower channel, and for supporting the attack on a wider front on the other side Just before midnight on the 26th, the heavy bombardment along the front of General Caviglia's three armies began, and was joined for the first time by the British guns, whose presence had been hitherto concealed Seven hours afterwarda Cavan's Tenth Army went across, and, thanks to the spring board it had obtained in the Grave di Papidopoli, did all that was required of it. The right wing consisted of a Italian divisions (23rd and 57th), the left wing of 2 British divisions (7th and 23rd) The British had Army, and the right front was enlarged by to cross half a mile of river, and many were the 10th Italian Division Tarther south lost in it, but they went on without a pause the Third Italian Army was now coming to the conquest of the first line of Austrian into action, and also crossed the Piace The trenches, and by nightfall had established. Monticano was forced on the night of the a deep and wide bridge head on the other 20th, and by the 30th the Third Army had side of the Piave, covering seven villages Behind this bridge-head the task of bridging the 31st the line of the Livenza was in the the Piave went on with unflinching energy. despite the flood and the enemy aero- Austrian defeat depended thenceforward planes

This was the real break through for north of it the 8th and 12th Italian Armies south powers had vanished of the Quero defile, though they had crossed. could make no headway, because sufficient

nigh by the 14th British Corps, preliminarily Piave to establish them in a winning position The situation was remedied by sending over the Italian 18th Corps (General Basso) to cross by Cavan's bridges This was done on the night of the 27th-28th, and next morning, with its reinforcements, the Tenth Army was able to hold out a hand to help the Eighth Army, and to begin to outflank the Austrians opposed to that army The advance for this end was resumed on the morning of the 28th, and by night the Tenth Army had been pushed well forward to the river Monticano farther east The Austrians facing the Eighth Army became at once nervous about their communications, and let so their hold of the Susegina heights. Whereupon the commander of the Eighth Italian Army brought his right wing over the Prave from Nervesa, joined up with the Tenth Army, and thus doubled the drivingfront of his wedge

This wide frontal philans began to go forward in parallel columns on the morning of the 20th, the Austrians retreating nervously before it, and a stretch of the river Monticano was seized during the day Some British cavalry (Lieutenant-Colonel Lowther) seized a bridge, and the hurrying British and Italian infantry began to convert the retreat in front of them into a rout Hardly any Austrian stand was made, except at the Monticano, and it was here that the last serious resistance was offered. It had few prospects of success, for by this time the 31st Italian Division had 101ned the British divisions on the left of the Tenth joined in what now became a pursuit By Allies' hands, and the magnitude of the only on the ability of the victors to press fast on their heels. The enem, 's defensive

On the northern front, the Fourth Army's ³ It included the 132nd American Resument

demonstration and been constitted into an landing party at Trieste had received the assoult which the Austrian troops neither varmest welcome from the Jugo-Slav could, nor would resist. They met the National Council which had taken over the victors half-way coming down from the town. The Austrian fleet was already out mountains in droves. Their artillers the of the war in one advancing line

was pushing on faster and faster, and the regiment, had defeated 63 Austro Hun-Third Army extended its active operations garnin divisions (It should be added that to the coast. The enemy was in flight and the 3rd British Division, the 48th, had been could not recover. It was now the moment lent to the Italian Sixth Army, and in its for the Italian commander to throw every advance aguinst the collapsing Austrians man, gun, and horse into the scale, and the captured 20 000 prisoners, including a corps First Army was sent into action on the left commander, and 500 guns. Lord Cavan of the Sixth Army up the Assa valley, tal ing computed the captures of the other two Monte Cimone and the Tonezza plateau in divisions of the 14th Corps at 28 000 prisits stride. At the same time the Seventh oners and 210 guns.) The epitaph on the Army broke through the enemy's fortifica Austro Hungarian failure was written by tions at the Sella del Tonale, and went on General Diaz who, in speaking of its deto capture the heights which had been held struction, said that it had left in the hands by the Austrians north of the Pasubio masuf of the victors 300 000 men and 5,000 guns All the valley roads from the northern tront. A more severe recauche for Caporetto can to Trent were crowded with fugitives and hardly be imagined. It is necessary to the Italian commanders had now no objec note that, according to the German Headtive more difficult than that of cutting the quarters Staff, the best Hungarian divisions retreat By 3rd November Trent was had been withdrawn from the Piave by occupied and on the same day an Italian order of the Archdul e Josef

compulsion of which had kept them solid. The victorious armies had nothing to do had fuled them and the whole Grapps sec- but to move forward though on the Tagliation gave way. They offered more resistance mento on 4th November, some resistance towards Asiago but the Italian Sixth Army was offered by Austrian rear guards, one was now sent up the Brenta valley to under of which came into collision with the 222nd mine their defence The Austrians lield American Regiment on 4th November, with out for a day or so from Stelvio to Astico loss to itself. But, almost before the flicker but as the Sixth Army pushed engerly up of this shirmish had died down, the rest the Brenta, and began action over an ev of the Austro Hungarian forces had ceased tended front, they began to waver. The to exist as an army. By the afternoon of Fourth Army on its right, was able to clear 4th November an armistice had been sought the whole of its front, and its success was and granted, and Austria Hungary was out passed on to the Twelfth Army which of the war The battle, which had begun pushing up through the Ouero defile linked on 24th October and lasted barely to days. the Fourth, Twelfth, and Lighth Armies had been one in which 51 Italian divisions, one advancing line 3 British divisions, 2 Trench divisions, 1 On the right of this again the Tenth Army Czecho Slovak division, and 1 American

CHAPTER XXII

THE NAVY DURING THE WAR

sized as the three deficiencies of the British in the same month, and in the month folfast battle-cruisers, destroyers, and a suffi- Falkland Islands in the South Pacific. ciently-protected harbour on the East Coast of Great Britain. To the deficiency in battle-cruisers is to be attributed the risk The outbreak of hostilities had left a number cruisers Dresden. Nürnberg, and Leibzig of German warships unshepherded, and, (each 3500 tons; speed, 25 knots; armament, close with her. On 9th November the was being fought, Captain of the Emden (von Müller), landed

Lord Fisher in his memoirs has empha- at sea of speed and gun calibre were repeated Navy at the beginning of the Great War: lowing, by the actions of Coronel and the Admiral Graf von Spee left Kiao-Chau in July with the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenan. twin cruisers of 11,000 tons, speed 22 knots, to British mercantile shipping in 1914 and eight 8.2-inch guns, six 6-inch, and lighter the early part of 1915, as well as the disaster armament. He was separated by many to Admiral Cradock's squadron off Coronel. hundreds of miles from the three light though their destruction or internment was ten 4.1-inch and lighter guns; two torpedocertain, they followed the right course in tubes). The Dresden was in the Atlantic; doing all the damage they could compass the other two were in the Pacific. The before being rounded up. For example, Dresden had many adventures in joining the German light cruiser Emden, after having von Spee's squadron, to which the Nürnberg disappeared from the China station, and and Leipzig were carlier recruits, and narhaving been unheard of for six weeks, rowly escaped capture by the British West appeared on 10th September, 1914, in the Atlantic Squadron under Admiral Cradock. Bay of Bengal, and captured six British ships: The coaling and victualling of the units of on 22nd September she bombarded Madras: Admiral von Spee's squadron were contrived on 30th September captured seven more with great resource, daring, and ingenuity. British steamers; on 20th October another Eventually the squadron was made one off seven: on 28th October steamed into Penang Easter Island, where it obtained considerable Roads and sank a Russian cruiser, and a supplies of meat from the dwellers there. French destroyer which gallantly tried to who were at that time ignorant that a war

Admiral Cradock's squadron was a weak a party at the Cocos Keeling Islands to one, even when reinforced by the Glasgow, destroy the cable and wireless station; but which, like the Good Hope and the Monbefore this could be done the telegraphists mouth, had been searching for the Dresden. on the island sent out a message which was The Good Hope (14,100 tons; speed, 22h picked up by the Minotaur, and re-signalled knots; armament, two 0.2-inch guns, sixto H.M.A.S. Sydney, a cruiser of the Aus- teen 6-inch and lighter guns), and the Montralian squadron on convoy duty. Within month (9800 tons; speed 23 knots; armament, three hours of the receipt of the message the fourteen 6-inch and lighter guns), were old Sydney, proceeding full speed towards Cocos ships, and of faulty construction for fighting, Keeling, sighted the Emden, engaged her not good in a sea, and exposing a great deal half an hour afterwards, and having the range of surface. The Glasgow was a good light of her with 6-inch guns to 4.1-inch guns, cruiser of 4800 tons, with two 6-inch and forced her ashore, burning and half sunk. ten 4-inch guns, and a speed over 26 knots. The Emden fought-strongly, and surren- It will be seen that this squadron was of dered only after losing 7 officers and 104 very heterogeneous units, and could as a squadron be outsteamed, outranged, and out-The lessons of the insuperable advantages manocuvred by that of von Spee. It was,





A German battleship disabled by the gunfire of H.M.S. Warspite

owing to its lightness of meal, to have been distroyed one of her turners. Her guas were ounge to its numers of mean, to have reen activates one of ner survey. He guns were reinforced by the old built-ship Geospha, pur out of declar, and the deported fortor of the declaration of the survey of the declaration of the survey of th retificaced by the oid cette-ship Caroous, put out of accon, and the cooperace coror of which fand four 12-inch, gives in addition to less commender to draw not encough to use States one two tax and poor to common to an examination of the trebte 6 such but her speed was only (6) the torpedoes was fulfill. The Manusch on the Act of the Act not more remarkative not no special natural page on an impensation may stude. The remandation of the did not crick up to Gradeck's five released, and deceded on down by the contract of the c

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the primary continues as a continue to the continue of the con sure way consists or records one vocations only more some occur one one we can sure larger, though he had the sim behind him. It was his duty to each and wars the But it was clear that when the sun set the Canopus. British ships would be silhouetted against Ortens supp a cour or internation opinion to the state of for. Crickels districtor, under two made then usy back to the Fellisman Talenda, which is all rechability would be one source, how, creation, none or unuse one are one or one or reasons an attempt to rid himself of his prospective. Islands, which is all probability round be were some so the actualings of personal cramers attended and appears, under the contract of the op. Admiral Dorston Surfee. These not their possess. Just use many and manage assessed assessed, and we were some two properties from points from seed that speed to manage. Admiral Standbury, Ken, Ologow, and our proms, increase, and specia or manuscal annaes constant, case, visigon, and when after its o'clock, British at a South Mahane condensus, and the light togens to from them, dray nearer the squadeon reacher For Wilson, Falland to the British sandon, and opened fire at latands, where the Compan, Corman, to use formulas aparatous, out operato are at another, when the Scientific The Scientific and Continues had Generous, and Drived Streets them on The Association of the Continues and Co Secretary special for gunner, and after December. They began to proper for the the producting about the first caught but search for Admird von Speed sequences. The David We was the second of the David We was the second of the David We was the Spee who came enough to one votes stope not not assume that the contract of the contra the true control man, and true young under the standard way the standard way to be standard with the standard way to be st

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The Glasgow joined the Canopus, and the and certain distributings by turning four raised by Admind ton Spec. Meanwhile points and closing in nature to the land. It as soon at the British Admiraly learned of Pouns and county or meater to the man, it so book to the returned resources of the state of the its a copyrate encopy much como mareno our unamon, il properso una sona una como mareno del properso una como del properso una como mareno del properso una como del properso del properso del tops to review these two various contrast that the second of the definition of the desirable and friendly and the contrast that the contra guas vous son ann una urges, ann ner an useurs su annang eus vrimans, ann ne Johnel gunt, which were almost awah in the ignomance of the presence there of its new rolline seat, were ineffective. The School. Addresses. The Germans version on a class rolling seas, were ineffective. The Schops defenders. The Germany arrival on a clear toring man, was indicated. Also control of controls. And vacuum actives on a conditional socied thirty-fire hits on her, and marriage was revealed to the signalizes on

the island at 8 o'clock, and at 9.20 a.m. long day in front of him, and nothing to fear, the Gneisenau and Nürnberg were visible while he kept off the German cruisers and getting ready to shell the wireless station. hammered them at long range. Just before The Canopus, inside the harbour, loosed off one o'clock the Inflexible fired the first shot a salvo of 12-inch shells at them; but the at the enemy squadron at a 5-miles range; Germans do not seem to have been immediand thenceforward the action split into three ately apprised of the presence of the battle- sections. The Keut, Glasgow, and Coruwall cruisers, though they changed their course, were sent to deal with the light cruisers Leipzig (at which the first shots had been fired). Nürnberg, and

> Dresden, which von Spee had sent away to the south-west, while the Invincible and Inflexible dealt with the Sharnhorst and Gneisenau. The slow Carnarvon toiled after the big cruisers; the Bristol had been left behind to deal with the enemy colliers. Admiral von Spee was in a hopeless position,

The Scene of the Battle of Jutland, May 31-June 1, 1916

but he fought a sailor's devoted action, sacrificing his life and his ships rather than allow them to fall into the hands of the enemy. At about twenty-five minutes past one his ship, the Scharnhorst, and its sister, the Gneisenau, abandoned the attempt to run, and began to close the range in order to do what damage they could.

At 0.45 they could have been left in no lently served, and the Invincible was hit doubt, for, following the Glasgow and the several times, though the hits the Scharnhorst Kent, the Invincible and Inflexible put out received were very much more damaging. to sea.

Their guns were excel-

At a quarter to two the Scharnhorst's shells As soon as the character of the British began to straddle the Invincible, and Admiral ships was apparent the German squadron Sturdee drew away again to avoid risks that adopted the only course open to them, which were unnecessary, while his 12-inch guns was that of flight. The Scharnhorst and the still continued their punishment. After Gneisenan were more heavily armoured than another twenty-five minutes of it the Gerthe two British battle-cruisers, but in speed man ships could stand no more, and began and gun-power were no match for them. to draw out of the fight. Admiral Sturdee The conditions of the battle of Coronel were went after them, and in half an hour had therefore reversed. Admiral Sturdee had a reopened fire, his guns and those of the

Gueisenau with increasing severity as the two could not afford to spend time in long-range German ships became harder to handle, tactics, and went in as close as he could get Still the Scharnhorst replied, though on fire, to finish it. The Kent was hit thirty-six and still the distance between the ships times by the Nürnberg's shells, but by halflessened, till nearly every 12-inch shell past six the German ship, on fire forward found the target. At a quarter-past four- and her guns silenced, at last hauled her flag. that is to say, after an hour and a half of this Like her companions, she had fought as long terrible experience-an eyewitness on the as was humanly possible, and sank an hour Incincible thought he saw the Scharnhoust later. Only twelve of her crew could be strike her flag. Whether, indeed, she did will picked up. The Dresden, after playing hidenever be known, for at that moment another and-seek for three months, took refuge at shell struck her broken hulk, and she turned Juan Fernandez, and having been found over on her side and eapsized. The In- there by the Glasgow and Kent, on 14th cincible and Inflexible then turned their guns. March, 1915, was blown up by her comon to the Gurisman, which was still fighting mander after a five minutes' action. the Invincible.

accurate; the condition of the Gueisenau Mersey, on 5th July, 1915; the Karlsrühe is more and more desperate. But it was not believed to have sunk somewhere in the till ten minutes after six that the Guisenau West Indies in November, 1914; the Priuz ceased to fire altogether, persisting with one Eitel Friedrich, a converted eruiser, was gun till her ammunition had been exhausted, interned at Newport News by the United At two minutes after six she turned on her States Government on 9th April, 1915, and side, and the boats of the Iuflexible and the Krouprius Wilhelm suffered the same Carnarcon were ordered out to save sur- fate on 26th April, 1915. Of ships which vivors. Like the Scharmhorst, she had been the Germans succeeded in sending to sea as fought by her commander to the last; and raiders during the war the most successful the action of these two ships render the was the Morte, which, after a most spirited Battle of the Falklands the brightest page career of several months in 1916, got back in the annals of the German Navy.

heavily-armed companion, was first to draw had time to settle down to her career. up to the German light cruisers, and engaged

Infiexible battering the Scharnborst and till nearly half-post five. The Kent's captain

as fiercely as if the battle could be won. Her Of the other German warships which were cantain faced his great adversaries (who at at sea when war was declared, the Könipsberg this hour had been joined by the Carnarcon), hid up the Rufigi River on the eastern coast and for an hour continued firing, though the of Africa, where her exit was blocked by range was too great for the shells to damage sinking ships in the passage-way, and where, after a very curious fight, she was destroyed The British fire became more and more by the fire of two monitors, Severn and in March to her German anchorage, having Meanwhile, the Glasgow, Kent, and Corn- captured or sunk 15 merchant ships. Another wall had continued their pursuit of the raiding ship, the Greif, was caught and sunk Dresden, Nuruberg, and Leipzig. The in the North Sea by the Alcantara on 29th Glassow, outpacing her slower but more February of the same year, before she had

With no fleet at sea, the German navy had the Leipzig (2.0 p.m.) till the Cornwall came but two courses open to it. The first, which up (4.15); the Keut having turned to follow proved impracticable, was to snatch a victory the Nurnberg. After a fight lasting more by surprise or tactics from the British Grand than three hours the Leipzig, pierced till she Fleet; the second was to inflict what damage looked like a fire-bucket, surrendered, but was possible by sudden raids on the British afterwards sank. The Dresden had long East Coast. The second course might aid been lost in the mist. The Kent had a long the first by tempting the British Commanderchase after the Nuruberg, which could hardly in-Chief to some imprudent disposition of have been caught but for trouble with her his forces. There was a third course, boilers, and the two ships were not in range subsequently taken, which was to develop the submarine to the highest point of English coast. It was about 7.30 a.m. At as a quiescent, but potentially active, as a screen for the British fleet. While so detained they could not be used for the purpose for which they were urgently the German navy's energy and ingenuity which also had hit her with torpedoes. first displayed itself in raids on the English and the 13.5-inch guns of the "Cat" had. The Aurora first sighted an enemy light impunity. They were made no more. cruiser (the Kohlberg), and Admiral Beatty,

numbers and efficiency and achieve the 8.0 a.m. the distance between the squadrons advantages of a blockade of Great Britain by had been reduced to 10 miles; a shot from the destruction of her merchant shipping one of the Lion's 13,5's hit the Blücher, the and transports. This plan involved keeping last in line of the German big four. Ten the German High Seas Fleet in harbour minutes later the Tiger engaged the Blücher. and the Lion attacked the Sevdlitz. After adversary, with which the British Grand another short interval the Princess Royal's Fleet must reckon, and must accordingly 13.5's were brought to bear; and the illtreat as a fleet in being-a condition of this fated Blücher, slower than her consorts, responsibility being that a sufficiently large began to fall behind into the fire of the New number of destroyers must always be kept Zealand. She was on fire by 9.45, and so were the Sevdlitz and the Derfflinger. By 10.45 the Blücher, terribly mauled, fell out of the line. but it was not till after 12 o'clock that she required, namely, that of holding the German was sunk by a torpedo from the destroyer submarines in check. These technical con- Meteor, just after she had fired her last shot. siderations did not appear in 1915, when Hersurvivors were picked up by the Arethusa,

The Lion, which was leading the pursuit East Coast. These began on and November, of the other German cruisers, was hit by 1914, the day following a British Admiralty a stray shot about 11 o'clock, and, though proclamation of the closure of the North Sea not vitally damaged, was unable to make owing to the persistent sowing of mines. more than 10 knots an hour. Thencefor-On 16th December 5 German battle- ward she had to be protected by a ring of cruisers, Derfflinger, Sevillitz, Moltke, Von destrovers to keep off submarines (and evender Tann, and Blitcher, bombarded Scar- tually had to be partially towed home), borough, Whitby, and the Hartlepools, while the Tiger, Princess Royal, and New inflicting losses of about 100 civilians killed, Zealand went on after the enemy. Admiral and soo wounded. The same squadron, Beatty left the Lion and followed the chase less the Von der Tann, and accompanied by at some distance in a destroyer, but at mid-6 light-cruisers and a force of destroyers, day he met his 3 battle-cruisers returnwas encountered on 24th January, 1915, by ing. Deterred by the risk of plunging into Admiral Beatty, with the "Cat" squadron an enemy mine-field, or of being sunk by of battle-cruisers, the Lion, Tiger, and one of the mines which the German squadron Princess Royal, as well as the New Zealand, was strewing in its flight, they had broken off and Indomitable, and the light-cruisers South- the action. Such results as accrued were ampton, Nottingham, Birmingham, Lower- satisfactory. The Blücher was a valuable toft, together with the Arethusa, Aurora, ship; and the promptness with which an and Undaunted, and three squadrons of opportunity had been seized convinced the destroyers. This was a powerful squadron, Germans that the British Admiralty Intelligence Department was too well informed to cruisers outmatched anything the Germans permit of the continuance of such raids with

In the North Sea a ceaseless activity was having been signalled, immediately worked pursued, in which destroyers, submarines, up pace in order to get in touch with the patrol-boats, trawlers, all played their part, main German squadron now visible. The and their activities were dependent on the German squadron as immediately declined protection of the big ships at their backs; engagement, changing course from north- but of larger fleet actions there were no signs, west to south-east, the squadrons being then and no symptoms beyond the rumours of the some 14 miles apart and 40 distant from the full-dress cruises of units or combinations

ships, was afterwards sent, despite a protest should do so. Admiral de Robeck, on number of forts were silenced, though not event, had reached. till the end of the day, and the trawlers could After this fleet actions were suspended, then be sent in for the clearance of the mines, ' and were replaced by the multifarious duties which was one of the steps towards the of routine, with all that it implied, in patrol methodical reduction of the Dardanelles work, in submarine effort, and in the unendaccording to Admiral Carden's plan.

Major-General Sir C. E. Celdwell: Marning Pest, 24th

of the British Grand Fleet, and strictly Meanwhile discussion was taking place limited sallies of the German High Seas in England as to the desirability of supple-Fleet. As on land, so at sea, there seemed trenting the naval attempt by a land expedito uninstructed eyes to be a deadlock. The tion. On 6th March another bombardment German High Seas Fleet could do no more, was undertaken; between then and 16th and no hetter, than aet as a passive threat March, when Admiral Carden resigned owing to Great Britain; the British Grand Fleet, to ill-health, handing over the command to though doing its share in the war by the pro- Admiral de Robeck, the question whether tection which it afforded to its sea transport, the Navy should or should not act alone as by the blockade which it exercised on the was decided in favour of combined opera-Central Powers, could not undertake offen- tions. Admiral de Robeck was in fayour of sive operations on the German strongholds again making an attempt to break into the without risks which the War Council were. Sea of Marmora with ships. The sweeping unwilling to sanction. Germany conceived operations in the meanwhile had been conthe multiplication of her submarines and the dueted with great gallantry, but also with intensification of submarine warfare as a considerable loss, On 18th March Admiral way out of the deadlock; Great Britain de Robeck's decisive endeavour began at sought in the Dardanelles and at Gallipoli, 10.45 a.m. Four big ships, the Queen Eliza a back-door key to it. At the Dardanelles beth, Inflexible, Agamemnon, and Lord Nelson, the departure from prudence resulted in engaged the forts of Chanak and Kelid Bahr the loss of capital ships, as Lord Fisher had at long range. Other ships closed in, and predicted that it would, though he did not a French squadron (Suffren, Gaulois, Charleveto the adventure by a threat of resigning magne, Bouret) got up the Straits as far as his position as First Lord. His opinion was Kephez Point. They were relieved three that of the best-informed naval strategists, hours after in their close range bombardment who, in a secret memorandum presented in by the Vengeance, Irrevistible, Albion, Majes-December, 1006, to the Imperial Defence tic, Swiftsure, and Ocean, and as the French Committee, condemned any project of rush-ships were passing back the Bouvet struck ing the Dardanelles by ships as futile and a floating mine and sank. All the ships dangerous. These anticipations were home were now being hit, but the attempt went on out in the event. The bombardment of the till dark. At four o'clock the Irresistible went Dardanelles began under the direction of down in deep water; then the Ocean sank, Admiral Carden on 19th February, 1915, and the Inflexible was so badly damaged that He had under him a old battleships: the she could only just limp away, thanks to Vengeance, Cornicallis, Triumph; a newer the ability of her officers and the discipline one, the Asamemnon, the battle-cruiser In- of her erew. The attempt had thus failure flexible; 3 old French battleships, the written upon it, though Admiral de Robeck Suffren, Gaulois, and Bouvet. (The Queen was anxious to go on, and the British and Elizabeth, the newest of the British battle- French War Council were willing that he from Lord Fisher, but was fortunately with- second thoughts, urged that the mine menace drawn; otherwise she would probably have was too great, and that a feet operation been torpedoed.) On 25th February the should be combined with one on land,2 which bombardment was again renewed, and a was the conclusion that some, wise before the

ing task of supporting land operations wher-

ever necessary, from the North Sea to the Hipper near Horn Reef. Previous indica-Dardanelles and the Persian Gulf.

Sir John Jellicoe, started from its three bases battle-cruisers were sighted at a distance of of Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, Cromarty about 13 miles. They had turned south-Firth, and Rosyth, for one of its periodical wards to seek the aid of the German battlesweeps of the North Sea. Sir David Beatty, ships coming up behind them. Beatty with the Battle-Cruiser Squadron and the steered east-south-east in a line of bearing, 5th Battle Squadron (Sir Evan Thomas), closing in towards the German course with set out from Rosyth; and a rendezvous was his light-cruisers ahead. At 3.48 the appointed in the North Sea which would opponents opened fire at 18,000 yards. place Sir David about 60 miles south of Sir Beatty appeared to have the advantage, since 2 p.m. on 31st May the battle fleet under and behind him Evan Thomas's battleships Jellicoe was between Aberdeen and the north were coming into action, though at the very end of Jutland, steaming line ahead in 6 great range of 20,000 yards (11 miles). But divisions, which reading from east to west the haze floating up from the east obscured were: 1st Division (Vice-Admiral Jerram), the German target, while the British one was King George V. Ajan, Centurion, Erin; and still visible, and there seems little doubt that Division (Rear-Admiral Leveson), Orion, the German system of fire control at the Monarch, Conqueror, Thunderer; 3rd Divi- beginning of an action was rather better than sion (Admiral Sir J. Jellicoe), Iron Duke, the British, though it had a tendency to get Royal Oak, Superb, Canada; 4th Division out of gear more quickly. The consequence (Vice-Admiral Sir D. Sturdee), Benbow, was calamitous, though not disastrous. The Bellerophon, Temeraire, Vanguard; 5th Queen Mary was destroyed by a salvo and Division (Rear-Admiral Gaunt), Colossus, blew up; the Indefatigable was struck by Collingwood, Neptune, St. Vincent; 6th several shells, one of which pierced her Division (Admiral Burney), Marlborough, magazine, and she, too, blew up. In spite Revenge, Hercules, Agincourt. They were of the advantage gained by these occurrences screened by 3 destroyer flotillas, and a light- the fire of the German ships slackened under cruiser squadron, and other cruisers, the British attack. Cochrane, Shannon, Minotaur, Defence, Duke

The Galatea (light-cruiser) reported this time).

tions gathered by sea-plane of the enemy's . . position reached Admiral Beatty at about On 30th May, 1916, the Grand Fleet under 3.30, and shortly afterwards the German John Jellicoe, but in contact with him. At he had 6 battle-cruisers to the enemy's 5.

Between the two battling squadrons the of Edinburgh, Black Prince, and Warrior, were destroyers fought their own engagement, 16 miles ahead. At the same hour, 60 miles and the 8 destroyers of the British 13th south, Sir David Beatty, with the battle- Flotilla beat back the attempt of the 15 cruisers Lion, Queen Mary, Princess Royal, German destroyers to close, and then went and Tiger (all 26,000 tons and carrying eight in themselves to attack. The fight was all 13.5-inch guns), Indefatigable and New the time streaming southwards at 25 knots. Zealand; and Sir Evan Thomas, with the and was therefore fast approaching the onbattleships Barham, Malaya, Warspite, and coming German main fleet. This was Valiant (same tonnage as the big battle- sighted at 4.42. Sir David Beatty, therefore, cruisers, with eight 15-inch guns, but lesser immediately turned north, and as he apspeed), were steaming north to close up with proached Admiral Evan Thomas's squadron Sir John Jellicoe. Their scouts of de- these big ships closed up behind his line. stroyers and light-cruisers found that the The German battle-cruisers also changed German fleet was coming up along the Jut- course from south-south-west to northland coast on a parallel course, headed by north-west to follow in parallel line. The 5 battle-cruisers under Admiral von Hipper, return north began about 5 o'clock (summer

to Admiral Beatty at 2.20, and he at once Admiral Beatty had now successfully turned south-south-east to head Admiral deployed, in spite of his losses, 8 ships destroyers also, in spite of Insses, were still not its full power. The mist, and the active, and the German line of battle- enemy's smoke screens, intervened. From cruisers began to waver. Moreover, Beatty 6.17 to 8.20 the running fight to the southhad the legs of them (25 knnts average to 22), west was conducted in the mist, and seldom and began to aim at heading them and en- were more than 8 of the retreating German eireling their route. His method of doing ships to be seen together; more often not this would be (after passing ahead of the more than 3 or 4. At nine o'clock they German ships) to change direction from were out of sight. The pursuit did not north-cast to east. Two important things cease; the destroyers were sent in to do what were happening at the same time: Sir John damage they could; and they did a great Jellicoe's main fleet was approaching, and deal. Next day, 1st June, the mist conthe haze was thickening to a perplexing mist. tinued, closing down visibility to 3 miles. Into this mist the light-cruisers first ran, and By o a.m. the destrovers had been recalled. in it, at 7.15. British and German sighted one the Grand Fleet was reunited, and returned another. The bigger British ships had to to its bases. come up cautiously, lest they should injure

engaged were counted by the hundred. further mishap to the Warspite, which, fortunately, was remedied without loss of Baselett, 1919. Memoir, by Admini von Trepin. (Hunt & the ship; and at last the full weight of the the ship; and at last the full weight of the
British Grand Flect was measured against von Loringhoven. (Counable, 1919)

against Admiral von Hipper's 5; the British that of the German High Seas Fleet. But

The British losses were 3 battle-cruisers, their comrades of Beatty's command, for, Queen Mary, Indefatigable, and Invincible; though in this narrative the names of ships 3 Armoured Cruisers, Defence, Black Prince, are given by tens, the number of eraft and Warrior; and 8 destroyers. The admitted German losses were I battleship. About 6 o'clock Beatty had cleared the Pommern; I battle-cruiser, Litteou; 4 head of the German for his curling move- light-eruisers, Rostock, Frauenlob, Wiesbaden, ment, and, about 6.20, Admiral Hood, with Elbling; and 5 destrovers. The British the 1rd Battle-Craiser Squadron, appeared losses were, therefore, heavier than the out of the mist on his port bow, and by Germans: the adverse balance arising from Beatty's orders fell in hehind. Again an the early losses of the Queen Mary and the accidental shell found its way to a magazine, Indefatigable. Those losses must be partly exploding in the ammunition shaft, and the attributed to good German gunnery, as must Incincible, with Hood and all on board, went that of the Incincible, though in each a shell down. Beatty now strove to place himself found its way to the magazine. It must be between the land and von Hipper, whose conceded, nevertheless, that Admiral von battle-cruisers had by this time been reduced Tirpitz 1 lays stress on the better protection from 5 to 3, and who was being forced to turn both against gunfire and below water of the first east, then south, then south-west. German type of battleship and battle-Jellicoe, meanwhile, preceded by the cruiser cruiser; and the inference is that the 3 (not battle-cruiser) squadrons of Rear- ships that Beatty and Hood lost were not so Admirals Arbuthnot and Heath, was feeling well protected above water as the German. his way towards the German main fleet under This admission having been made, and Admiral von Scheer, now coming up behind proper credit having been given to the gunvon Hipper, and was striving to deploy hery of what Baron Freytag von Loringhoven2 without injuring Beatty's squadrons. The called Germany's "belaurelled young fleet", cruisers of Arbuthnot and Heath, pushing the fact remains that in the essentials of a towards the German main fleet, came under naval battle victory remained with the a heavy fire, and the Defence (Rear-Admiral British fleet, which outmancuvred and out-Arbuthnot), sank, and the Warrior was fought the German squadrons, and left them mortally damaged. At 6.17 the battle fleet no option other than a return to their harcame into action, though not without a bours, from which they did not again emerge

and "guns" are the accepted evidences of a unrestrictedly. The Lustama had been victory on land, and the destruction or torpedoed on 7th May, 1915, and President capture of the enemy's ships are the aim of a Wilson bad been exchanging Notes with the commander in a naval battle But, failing German Government for nearly a year on the opportunity to fight a naval battle to a the subject of torpedoing without warning, finish, victory remains not with the commander who inflicts the greater damage on his adversary, but with the fleet which, after sea, and of forbidding its use to the enemy

In the absence of any prospect of successfully engaging the British Grand Fleet, a contingency which the Bittle of Jutland had dispelled, and which the German naval authorities quite well perceived, there was but one resource left to them, and that was to develop submarine warfare to its utmost In pursuance of that policy it was incumbent narrated by Admiral von Tirpitz -It began on them not to risk their High Seas Fleet in another general engagement While it was in harbour it was still powerful, because it might come out, and while that possibility existed, the British Grand Fleet could not dispense with the quota of destroyers necessary as screens for its battle squadrons Consequently, the presence in German waters of the High Seas Fleet was a double support to the German submarine campaign It aided the submannes' exits and entrances, and it removed from the seas the most competent enemies of the submarine, namely, hostile destroyers

In the early stages of the war the German navy had attempted to use the submarine as a legal naval weapon, and with smaller U-boats than they afterwards constructed, bad a measure of success which was largely New Year's Day, 1915

ships had been active long before the Ger-

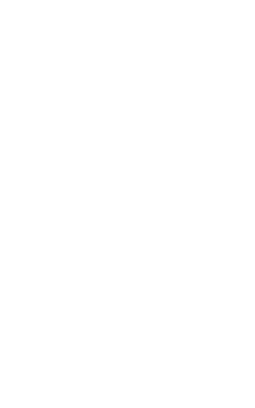
as a fleet except to surrender 'Prisoners" mans reached the decision to pursue it when the destruction of the cross Channel steamer Sussex (19th April, 1916) evoked from him a protest that hastened the breach the engagement, is best capable of keeping the between the United States and Germany, though it was not till and February, 1917. that Count Bernstorff was dismissed from Washington, and not till 6th April, 1917, that the United States declared war on Germany Nearly 2 million tons of shipping had been lost before that juncture From the German side the history of the submarine campaign against merchant vessels is thus in February, 1015, after three months discussions A year later von Tirpitz pressed for its unlimited use, but his policy was then rejected In Tebruary, 1917, it was opened Apart from its effect on neutral shipping-Scandinavian, Dutch, or Spanish-which was employed in bringing supplies to the Allies, the losses by attrition of British and Allied ships were extremely serious, so serious in short that when Admiral Sims, representing the United States navv. arrived in Great Britain about the time of the United States declaration of war in 1917, he was frankly told by the British Admiralty and Lord Jellicoe that if the then rate of losses continued undiminished, Great Britain would be unable to continue the war with any prospect of success after 1st November, 1917 1

The chief reason for the immunity of the due to insufficience of naval knowledge as German submarine was the absence of a to the possibilities Thus the Abouku, sufficient number of destroyers, a second Cressy and Hogue were torpedoed by U9 in reason was that the convergence of inwardthe North Sea on 22nd August off Holland, bound ships to Liverpool and the Channel the Cressy being first struck, and the others afforded the U boats an easy and continual while standing by her Lieutenant-Com- target The remedies suggested were two, mander Weddigen, commanding Ug, after- the first a larger supply of destroyers, the wards torpedoed the Hawke He lost his second the adoption of the convoy system submarine and his life in a subsequent with protective screens of destroyers. The attempt on the Grand Fleet The For- United States navy sent over to Great midable was torpedoed in the Channel on Britain her destroyer squadrons,2 which

The submarine warfare against merchant Art de by Adm til Sims in Pearton : Mago sur Oc



THE NAVAL RAID ON ZEEBRUGGE MOLE
Marines and bluejackets leading from H.M.S. Fundation



released more British destroyers for U-boat with German destroyers, and the continual hunting, for convoy screening, and for the hombardment of the Belgian coast by protection of transports and hospital ships, monitors. It was part of the Dover Patrol's the latter of which were not immune from work to watch the outlet of German sub-U-boat attack; and after some hesitations marines from the Bruges depot through the convoy system was whole-heartedly Zeebrugge and Ostend. Various plans were adopted by the mercantile marine. The considered for the reduction of these U-boat diminution in the U-bost successes was re- points-d'appui, the most attractive of which markable; the six months in which the was a combined land and sea operation. German Admiralty, basing prediction on This broke down owing to the German land mathematical calculations of sinkings, had attack on the coastal sector in 1917, and it promised the Reichstag that the war would was left to the navy, after examining afterhe over, receded farther and farther, and the native plans, to adopt that proposed by Vicelosses of German U-boats by capture and Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, who succeeded depth-charges hecame formidable. (In Vice-Admiral Bacon in command at Dover August, 1918, these were announced to (January, 1918). The plan in its broader number more than 150, and in the whole war outline had received the approval of Sir I. they amounted to more than 200.) This Jellicoe. On the night of 22nd April, after reversal of expectations took the Germans more than one rehearsal, and after the most by surprise. So confident had they been of precise elaboration of plans, a raid of the most the decisive effect of U-boat warfare that in daring and ingenious kind was made on the earlier period of the United States entry Zeebrugge and Ostend. The chief ship of into the war they deliberately neglected to the flotilla which set out was the old tooo ton attack American transports, because they did cruiser Vindictive (Captain Carpenter). She not believe American troops would arrive in was accompanied by 3 other old ships, Europe in sufficient numbers to affect the Thetis, Intrepid, and Iphigenia, which it was war before the issue was decided,

against it, which included the employment boats Iris and Daffodil. An old submarine, of "Q"-boats, or mystery ships, remained C3, was also taken, and charged with extherefore, during the latter half of 1916, the plosives, the intention being to ram her whole of 1917, and a part of 1918, the salient underneath the viaduet connecting Zecfeature of naval operations, though coin- brugge harbour with the Mole, and then cident with it were the ceaseless work of the blow her up. In addition, were a fleet of patrols; the incessant blockade by mines and motor launches, some alloted to the attack more active measures of the Central Powers, on Zeebrugge, some to that on Ostend; and and their adherents, Turkey and Bulgaria. a large number of coastal motor-boats, as In respect of Turkey mention must be well as a flotilla of destroyers in support. made of the sortie by the Gothen and the The attempt was supported, when the Breslau, which had been in the service of precise moment came, by a continuous the Porte since August 1014. The Breslaw bombardment from a squadron of monitors sank after striking a mine; the Goeben out at sea. A feature of the attack was the escaped, getting back to the Bosphorus smoke screen devised by Commander Brock, much damaged, after a similar accident, who lost his life in the landing operations.

Some of the finest work of the naval war
The forces met at their rendezvous about was the ceaseless task of the Dover Patrol, 15 miles out at sea at midnight, and then responsible for the safety and welfare of the parted for their twin enterprise, the Vintransport of men and supplies to and from dictios going towards Zeebrugge with her France; and in these operations may be companions, and the Sirius and Brilliant embraced the fight of the Swift and Broke 1 two other blockships, towards Ostend. The

intended to use as block ships for sinking in The submarine warfare and the struggle the entrance at Zeebrugge, and the ferry

In this engagement 3 British destroyers, of which destroyers. The Broks (Commander Evans) tecpedood one the Smilt and Broke were a new type, routed 5 German and rammed another

German garrison at Zeebrugge did not per- as was Lieutenant-Commander Hardy of the successfully blown up underneath the via- boiler trouble. duct. Meanwhile the blockships were being rammed at the entrance. The Thetis fouled naval warfare, unless the arrival and assistance the protecting nets as she burst the dock- of the United States navy's invaluable help gate, but gave the line to her companions, be counted as a decisive act in 1918. The the Intrepid and the Iphigenia, both of which German fleet was confidently expected to got into the channel, and were here success- come out by Sir David Beatty, who succeeded fully blown up, completely blocking the Admiral Lord Jellicoe as Commander-infairway. The task was done; and what was Chief; but its only appearance was after the even more remarkable, the Vindictive was Armistice, according to the terms of which taken successfully away, as were the Iris and the Daffodil, which, like the motor-boats, did battle-cruisers, 3 light-cruisers, 50 deremarkable service in picking up and taking away those who lived to tell the story of the great feat.

At Ostend, owing to the removal of a buov. the precise way was lost, and the Sirius and ish Grand Fleet under Sir David Beatty at the Brilliant both had to be beached and the Firth of Forth. An American squadron. sunk outside the harbour; but three weeks with Admiral Sims, representing the United later the commander of the Brilliant (Com- States navy, and a French armoured cruiser, mander Godsal) was given a second chance, with Rear-Admiral Grasset, were present,

ceive the Vindictive till she was 400 yards Sirius. These two officers took the Vinaway, and in less than five minutes she was dictive, patched up again, and the Sappho, alongside the Mole. She was kept in posi- on the night of 9th May; and the Vindictive tion there by the little Daffodil, and the Iris was sunk 200 yards up the channel of Ostend. also sat down close to the Mole. Landing Unhappily, Commander Godsal was killed parties jumped ashore to do what damage by a shell, just after the task had been perthey could; and the submarine C3 was formed. The Sappho had to stop owing to

This was almost the last great event of the Germany surrendered to battleships, 6 strovers, and all the submarines. The historic act took place on 21st November, 1918. when the main instalment of the German High Seas Fleet was surrendered to the Brit-

CHAPTER XXIII

TURKEY AND THE WAR

On either side of the chief antagonists of tested against further adventures in Russia, at Russia in the spring of 1915 was sanctioned been disastrous to the Allies. and organized under his direction. He pro- But no one of the Powers was able to do

the war were two schools, "Westerners", and in 1916, true to his conviction that if and "Easterners", the first of whom believed France and Great Britain were put out of the that the decisive battle must be fought on war, all other enemy Powers must collapse. that Western Front where the main forces of directed the chief effort of Germany against the deciding factors, namely Great Britain, the French at Verdun. Ludendorff, a conwere assembled; and consequently that all verted Easterner, brought the full power of other campaigns should be reduced to the German arms to bear against the Allies on smallest commitment, and should only be the Western Front too late. It is at least embarked upon under compulsion of neces- possible that had Germany from 1914 onsity. Lord Kitchener, Lord French, and wards concentrated her powers against the Sir Douglas Haig were "Westerners", so, Western Front and acted on the defensive in of necessity, were Generals Joffre and Foch; the Eastern theatre, the effect, though so also was von Falkenhayn, though the blow dangerous to Austria-Hungary, would have

Germany was inexorably bound to Austro- had been appointed (September, 1915) Hungarian requirements, and subsequently Viceroy of the Caucasus that his Chief of diverted part of her energies to Roumanian, Staff, General Yudenitch, began an invasion Bulgarian, Serbian, and Turkish campaigns. of Turkey in Asia. (The expedition drove The Allies similarly found themselves com- back the Turkish forces on Erzerum, and mitted to war against Turkey, at the Dar- captured it on 16th February. The Russians danelles, in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Pales- took many prisoners and a number of guns. tine; and against Bulgaria in Macedonia. But it was April, 1016, before they captured These commitments could not be avoided; Trebizond, on the Black Sea front, and but more than once, as in the Gallipoli though they spread southwards and eastcampaign, the prospect of a valuable victory wards to Bitlis and Mush and Lake Van, purchased cheaply allured Great Britain the attempt expired of the inanition which from the clearest and most direct path of began to seize Russia in that year.) military advantage. This was especially Before, however, this invasion had been true in respect of the war against Turkey, projected, the Grand Duke Nicholas had Turkey entered the war (1st November, been urgent in pressing on his Western 1014), as an ally of Germany, some two Allies the desirability of siding Russia by months after the arrival at Constantinople attacking the Turks at the Dardanelles. of the Goeben and the Breslau, which escaped This was one of the origins of the operations: from Messina in August 1914, having been the others were the belief of the Secretary nominally sold to Turkey by Germany. As of the Admiralty (Mr. Winston Churchill) an enemy of Great Britain and of France, in the possibility and advantages of success. Turkey could not do very much; but she Lord Fisher and Lord Kitchener were not barred the way to communication with convinced: and to the half-heartedness in Russia through the Black Sea, and so pre- which the preliminary operations were vented the interchange of supplies. She undertaken may be attributed in some part was, in short, Russia's enemy. Russia's the failure. The naval attack in February heterogeneous Black Sea fleet was of little and March, 1915, of which mention has use against the one good German unit, been made 1 robbed the enterprise of surprise; the Goeben, a fast, powerful battle-cruiser, and Lord Kitchener, when, on the repreand the only way in which the Russians sentations of Sir Ian Hamilton, a combined could come to grips with Turkey was by military and naval attack had been projected, way of the Caucasus.

General Liman von Sanders, and nominally able in that rail-less country at that time of while they were re-arranged. year for an invading army. It was not, in

what military considerations alone dictated. fact, till 1016, after the Grand Duke Nicholan

was reluctant at first to spare the 20th The Turkish armies were directed by Division which afterwards took part in it.

Sir Ian Hamilton's force consisted eventuby Enver Pasha, and 3 corps were sent ally of the 29th Division, the Australian and to the Caucasus front. They were badly New Zealand (Anzac) Corps, the East beaten in December, 1914, by superior Lancashire Territorial Division, and part Russian generalship and knowledge of of the Royal Naval Division. A French mountain fighting. The Russians advanced colonial corps under General D'Amade to railhead from Tiflis, and on 29th, 30th, co-operated. Sir Ian Hamilton, who wit-31st December destroyed Enver Pasha's nessed the naval attempt of March, decided expeditionary force. One Turkish corps to land his force on the top of the Gallipoli was surrounded and cut off at Sarikamish; peninsula, rightly rejecting any attempt on another badly mauled; and the remainder the opposite side of the Narrows, and also driven back on to the roads to Erzerum and deciding against an attack higher up the Brzingan. The victory would have been peninsula at Bulair. He also decided that yet more complete if it could have been his troops were not properly distributed in pursued: but there was no transport avail- their transports and a further delay occurred

¹See p. 257.

April at five beaches, V, W, X, with S and tion, with variations of Tantalus-like suc-Y on the flanks, and at Gaba Tepe, farther cesses leading to nothing decisive of the north, to which the Anzac Corps was sent. first weeks. Successes were gained by the

on the previous night; the landing forces on 4th and 21st June; by the 29th Division were transferred to naval boats, and it was on 28th June; and every attempt of the Turks under the protection of the fleet's guns that to counter-attack was stamped out. But the landings were made in the early morning. all the time the British and French losses On one flanking beach the landing was made were mounting, and the trying climate, the easily; on another the men had to re-embark. flies which spread dysentery, and the per-At the X, W, and V beaches the landings petual shelling, were taking a heavy toll of were made by the display of the greatest valuable lives. The conditions under which resolution and ingenuity (especially at V the campaign was fought by the British were beach, where a collier, the River Clyde, execrable; it is surprising that the troops played the part of the Trojan horse): but bore it so well. The Naval forces, the the losses were considerable. The Anzacs earlier operations of which are referred to at Gaba Tepe had landed a mile north of on p. 257, were placed in almost as disthe selected spot, and, pushing forward with advantageous a position when enemy subgreat determination, made good their foot- marines appeared: the Queen Elizabeth was hold, putting 12,000 men ashore in eight sent home just in time. The Goliath, the hours. A footing was thus gained on a Trinnph and Majestic, 3 old battleships, narrow strip of the peninsula; it was enlarged were torpedoed: the first-named with a loss next day; and on the 28th, the French Corps of 500 men. The British submarines with having been brought across from the other fewer targets and incomparably greater side of the Narrows to assist, Sir Ian difficulties, were able to retaliate by creeping Hamilton ordered a general advance towards up the Narrows and torpedoing a Turkish the dominating height of Achi Baba. The battleship, gunboats and transports. 20th Division was placed on the left, inclining In the middle of May General Gouraud towards Krithia; the French corps was took over the French command from General directed towards the redoubts of Kereves d'Amade, but was badly wounded by a shell Dere. It soon became apparent that just on 30th June and returned to France. Duras the gunnery of the Turks and their ability ing the months of June and July the war on to shell the landing beaches had been under- the peninsula was prosecuted with frequent estimated, so the effectiveness of their vigour, but always at a cost disproportionate fortified and machine-gun armed trenches to the results attained. During July a had also been underrated.

Ultimately the landing was made on 25th manded the Anzac Corps, was a recapitula-The transports with the troops had arrived Anzacs on 29th May, by the French Corps

new plan was elaborated by General Ian Achi Baba was a Turkish Verdun: and Hamilton, and 3 fresh divisions from Great after two attempts to rush it had failed, Britain were requisitioned to carry it into evidence accumulated with every subsequent effect. They were fewer than asked for. attempt that it could be stormed only at a and they were not seasoned troops. The ruinous cost. Such evidence was forth- plan was to land a force at Anzac to cocoming on May 6, when reinforcements operate with the Australian and New Zeaof Australians, Indians, the Naval Brigade, land forces in seizing the heights of Sari and part of the East Lancashire Division Bair, whence an advance would be made furnished material for a renewal of the across the waist of the peninsula. Two attack, which was continued in hard slogging divisions were simultaneously to be landed on the 8th and 9th, while the assailing force 4 miles north at Suvla Bay to support the was still short of Krithia and Kereves Dere. left flank of the Anzac thrust. Continuous The fighting in the rest of May and June, small attacks, and one on a larger scale at both at the top of the Peninsula and above Cape Helles (on 6th August) were made Gaba Tepe, where General Birdwood com- to divert Turkish attention, and on 4th, 5th,

and 6th August the reinforcements at Anzac were successfully landed, bringing up the force under General Birdwood to some 36,000 men. The force (9th Corps) to land at Suvia Bay was under the command of General Sir F. Stopford, with General Hammersley (11th Division), and General Sir B. Mahon (10th Division), as divisional leaders. Hammersley landed his 3 brigades on the night of 6th August, and secured a foothold to the north. General Mahon's division landed next day, 7th August.

The country at Anzac where the attack was made was like that farther north, very difficult, and the operation was begun on the night of 6th August to gain the advantage of surprise. Four columns, under General Godley, went forward, the right hand column to scale the ridges ending with Chunuk Bair, the left hand moving over easier ground towards Koja Chemen Tepe. There were obvious dangers of misdirection, and in spite of hard fighting, the night of the 7th found



The Suvia and Anase Line: a ed after the linking up of the two armies in August, 1915

the columns approaching their objectives. The Turks had become fully awake to the and in touch with one another, but still short situation, and were determined to dispute both of Koja and Chunuk. Before dawn the ground to the uttermost. They sent of the 8th a dash was made for Chunuk, in counter-attack after counter-attack; which was seized, but could not be held. and by 10th August all the valour of Ausa hold on the ridges, but on neither of the main objectives. The failure to take Koja had reacted on the position at Chunuk Bair, and the failure at Koja had been due to the want of co-operative support from the attack



Zone evicusted in Jenuary, 1916

double that.

the 32nd Brigade was sent forward. By casualties amounted to 31,380 killed, 78,740

tralians and New Zealanders, Gurkhas, that time it was too late. The Turks sent Wiltshires. Worcestershires, and Lanca- up reinforcements and stiffened their reshires, had been unable to effect more than sistance. Two new divisions, 54th and 53rd (Territorial), were sent up on the 10th, but neither effected anything of tactical or strategic value, though not for want of courage and devotion. It was all too late; the give and take struggles had supervened, and farther north at Suvla. The 17th Division General Stopford's force continued to fight a defensive rather than an attacking battle till 15th August, when General de Lisle took over the command of the oth Corps. Lord Kitchener declined to send more reinforcements from home; and General Ian Hamilton, moving round the 20th Division from Imbros to Suvla, and calling up other reinforcements from Egypt, made one more attempt on 21st August. It failed, though supported by the greatest gallantry on the part of the 20th Division, and the

Yeomanry-which reinforced it. The 11th Division, which also took part in the frontal attack, was held up. It was a day of heavy lesses, especially among the leaders. A supporting attack made from Anzac gained ground, and did so slowly for several days, but by 24th August it was clear that nothing more could be won without further reinforcements. As the Report of the Dardanelles Commission (December, 1010), observed, after General de Lisle replaced Sir F. Stopford the fighting was of a defensive character. It remained so, and meanwhile sickness increased, due partly to climate, partly to want of prevision in had lost 6000 men; the total casualties were the medical arrangements. General Byng occupied a command for some time in The failure at Suvia arose from various September, succeeding General de Lisle, causes. The chief of them was the failure but in truth the Dardanelles campaign was of Hammersley's 11th Division to advance at an end. It lineered on for some months: on 8th August, and this was partly owing to but on 15th October Sir Ian Hamilton was differences of opinion between two of the relieved of his command, and Sir Charles brigadier-generals, Sitwell and Hill, and Monro, who was sent out, reported in favour partly to the fact that the lack of water had of evacuation of the peninsula. This exhausted the troops. General Ian Hamil- decision was confirmed by Lord Kitchener. ton, hearing of the failure, steamed to Suvla, who himself went to Gallipoli, and the and arriving there early on the 8th found evacuation was carried out with the most General Stopford powerless to exert the remarkable success-in fact nothing so necessary driving power. He himself does became our conduct of the Gallipoli camnot seem to have supplied the omission, and paign as the manner of our leaving it-on it was not till the morning of the 9th that 18th December and 8th January. Our

wounded, and 9708 missing. From first to anticipated an attack on the right bank. losses of the same order.

which ended differently for Great Britain, Hoghton and Delamain, notwithstanding but in its middle history was clouded by their exhausting march, completed the disasters arising from the same fault of victory by falling on the Turkish reserves underestimating the enemy. A small as they came up. The British losses were British force was sent from India to the under 500: the Turkish prisoners numbered Persian Gulf early in the war to protect 1600, and the remnants of Nur-ed-Din's British interests (including oil), and in force fled up the river. November the force, increased to 3 Bagdad is no more than 90 miles from brigades (General Barrett), occupied Basra Kut in a direct line, and General Townshend (22nd November), and pushed northwards was encouraged by the optimism of his to the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates. superior officer, General Sir John Nixon, The British positions were repeatedly at- to attempt to push on there. His transport, tacked during the winter, and in April, 1915, his forces, and, as it turned out, his medical the reinforcements which had reached Sir equipment, were insufficient for the task. seemed to justify an advance. A column Azizieh, and learnt that the Turks were was despatched under General Gorringe to entrenched at Ctesiphon, 25 miles south of Ahwaz, on the oil-pipe line, and another Basedad. He was aware of the insufficiency under General Townshend began to advance of his force to give battle, and, in reply to beaten at Shaiba, south of Kurna (the Nixon an infantry brigade, cavalry, and defeated the Turks at Nasiriyeh (24th July). heavy fire on the second line of defences. Mesopotamia.

had I brigade on the left bank of the in the Tigris. Tigris, 2 on the right; the Turks therefore He reached Kut on 3rd December, and

last we used 400,000 men in it, and the one. In the night the 2 right bank brigades were redeeming feature is that some 300,000 transferred to be used in an inner and outer Turks were similarly detained, and suffered flanking manœuvre (Hoghton), while Townshend, with his original left bank brigade (Frv), fiercely attacked the Turkish centre. The Mesopotamian campaign was one Fry's brigade broke in, and the brigades of

John Nixon, who took command in January, He pushed on by a four days' march to up the river. On April 14th the Turks were his representations, received from General junction of the rivers), and on 21st May at artillery. With these Townshend advanced Kurns. Townshend pushed on to Amara on Ctesiphon, and after a night march on the Tigris, and occupied it on 3rd June, attacked the first Turkish lines as early as and in the next month Gorringe, pushing 22nd November. The main position was to the west up the Euphrates, heavily carried, and the assaulters advanced under At this time the Russians were on the upper On these they could make little impression, Euphrates, and there were some indistinct and the Turkish counter-attacks soon demonprospects of easily driving the Turks out of strated that the surprise was not wholly of British making. Nur-ed-Din Bey had, in Nasiriyeh is at the south end of an old short, retired on his supports, and on the channel, the Shatt-el-Hai, joining the 23rd these came up from Bagdad in great Euphrates to the Tigris at Kut, and on 1st strength to renew progressively heavier August it was decided to send General counter-attacks. Townshend hung on for Townshend forward to seize Kut if possible, two more days, losing a third of his strength; In six weeks he traversed the difficult and then (25th November) had no option country, his transport moving in part by the but to retreat, which he did by way of river, and he was in striking distance of the Azizieh, taking his 1300 Turkish prisoners town and of the Turkish forces commanded with him. He had to fight hard rear-guard by Nur-ed-Din Bey on 15th September, actions throughout the retreat, suffering Townshend's attack, a brilliant affair, was 4500 casualties, and losing 3 of his transmade on the 27th-28th. On the 27th he port gun-boats, Firefly, Comet, and Shaitan,

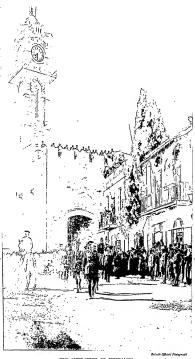
garrison having failed, Townshend sur- taken in April, 1916. rendered to Khalil Pasha. The remnants There was no hope of relieving Townswere at their mercy.

night march began on 7th March, was carried out with great secrecy and ability, Sir Jens Nimo in January, 1916.

by the 5th the Turks, distributing 4 and brought the British forces within striking divisions on three sides of it, had invested distance of the position, including its key, it. Their attacks began on the 8th De- the Dujailah Redoubt, at dawn on the 8th. cember, and a three days' assault was then Younghusband's division was near the river; followed by a more violent one on 23rd columns under Kemball and Keary were to December, which penetrated the north- move so as to outflank the Turkish right; eastern corner of the defences. The assail- Keary's column got into position in good ants were thrown out by Oxford Light time; Kemball's was late: and from a frank Infantry, and thereafter sat down to starve consideration of the reports of the battle out the British. The siege which Towns- the conclusion emerges that Kemball missed hend's division endured in Kut was one of a golden opportunity to rush the Dujailah miserable circumstances, and was redeemed Redoubt.1 The attack was held up: the only by the spirit of the defenders. In the surprise had vanished: and General Aylmer confined surroundings, with insufficient and had no other course than to withdraw to the improper food, and with hope of relief Um-el-Hanna positions. He was an unlucky continually deferred, they kept the flag fly- general. General Gorringe succeeded him: ing for 145 days, till 29th April, 1916, and under the new commander the posiwhen the last likely attempt to relieve the tions at Um-el-Hanna and Felahieh were

of the garrison were at first well treated hend, and no reason for risks, so that action by the enemy, but their transfer, mainly now wore a more leisurely aspect. General on foot, through Mesopotamia and Ana- Gorringe improved his position at El Sinn; tolia to Constantinople, was a disgrace to the May operations were then suspended: the Turks, and a tragedy for the bulk of and General Stanley Maude succeeded to the unfortunate British and Indians who the command in August, General Maude rectified the grosser scandals of transport and The first movements of the relief force medical supplies, and began his campaign were made by Generals Younghusband and against the Turks by a wholesale and neces-Aylmer on 3rd January, 1916, whose forces sary reorganization of his communications, included 2 Indian divisions. The march in which he included light railways from was made during the flood months of winter, Basra. He made his first move forward on and encountered successive lines of Turkish 12th December, 1916, when, while demonentrenchments, which could not be turned strating on the Sanna-i-Yat positions (which because they rested on swamps on the north were drawn across the Tigris), he sent side of the river. The exigencies of trans- General Marshall on a night march to clear port limited Aylmer's advance to the line the Shatt-el-Hai. Thenceforward the of the Tigris, and compelled him to attack history of the Mesopotamian campaign was these positions frontally. He carried the that of the success of General Maude's de-Sheikh Saad trenches on 8th January, but liberate, bold, but prudent generalship. could make no impression on the Um-el- After a brief pause, General Marshall's force Hanna position to which the Turks retired. crossed the Shatt-el-Hai, and pressed to-Having reorganized his transport, he then wards Kut on that side of the channel till it made the attempt to strike across the desert enclosed the Turkish force in the Dehra loop, on the south side of the Tigris towards the west of Kut and above it. By 15th-16th Es-Sinn position, which proved the most January, 1917, all the Turks were here driven formidable barrier drawn by the Turks in north of the Tigris and 2000 prisoners taken. the southern front of Kut, and which, 7 All this time General Cobbe was pinning the miles below the town, stretched for 16 miles Turks to their Sanna-i-Yat position east of from the Tigris to the Shatt-el-Hai. The and below Kut. A week later, when





THE LIBERATION OF JERUSALEM

General Allenby making his official entry into the Holy City on 11 December, 1917

north bank of the Tignis, Khalil Pasha began Marshall crossed the Tieris on 23rd February, Cohbe cleared the last defences of Sanna-i-Yat, and drove the Turks up river towards his coadjutor, who had won bridgeheads on the Tigris, and who now attempted to cut across the Turkish retreat. The Turkish rear-guards held Marshall up for a time, but then threw up the task and scattered leaving guns, baggage, gunboats, and prisoners behind. The pursuit was continued

It was resumed on 5th March. Lajj was as far as Azizich. passed, and Ctesiphon; and on the Diala in front of Bagdad, and 8 miles from it, Maude repeated the tactics which had manocuvred the Turks out of Kut. Cobbe's force, or a part of it, crossed the Tigris from the esst bank to the west (Stir), while Marshall, having crossed the Diala, scized and held the ridge of Tel Muhammed which defends Bagdad on the eastern bank. The Turks had no fight left in them, and Bagdad was entered by the British on 11th March.

From Bagdad one line of railway runs westwards towards Feludia on the Euphrates; another north-westwards to Samarra, the place where, formerly, the Berlin-Bagdad railway had been destined to join it. Both places were seized before the heat of summer stopped large operations. Turkish army had been destroyed as a unit, and distributed in fragments, more or less out of reach, some in the Jebel Hamrin hills, one force at Ramadie. Late in September, as the weather cooled, a cleverlyplanned march, entrusted by General Maude to a column under General Brooking, captured the whole of the Ramadie force, together with its commander, Ahmed Bey; and the following month the Jcbel Hamrin hills were cleared, and the Turkish base at Tekrit destroyed. Sir Stanley Maude's we will not cholers on 18th November, 1917, were retreating, and General Marchall old vectors so the sease of the sea

Marshall was threatening to cross to the General Merchall, who carried on his work with the same prudence as his leader, but prespirately to execute Kut, and while whose opportunities for action were more the Euphrates, and drove the Turks past Analı and Kirkak, on the Tigris, and ended his campaign immediately before the Armistice, with a crushing victory 50 miles south of Mosul.

The Khedive of Egypt, Abbas Pasha, who had, as Lord Cromer bore witness, been long restive under British tutelage, declared for the Central Powers shortly after Turkey, the Sultan of which was nominally his suzerain, had entered the war, and left the country. Prince Hussein was made Sultan of Egypt instead, and the country became a British Protectorate. In the subsequent operations the Egyptian army was not, however, called on to fight, and the campaigns in defence of Egypt were fought by Imperial divisions and British Indian forces. These campaigns were fought chiefly against the Turks, though, at the end of 1915, the Senussi-old desert fighters of the British-became very active on the western border, and owed their belligerence to German inspiration and assistance. The actions (23rd January and 26th February, 1916), undertaken against them demanded considerable and sustained energy on the part of a column commanded by General Lukin, who occupied Sollum, on the borders of Tripoli (14th March, 1916), which the Senussi had eaptured, and drove them back from the coast into the Libyan desert plateau, where they were pursued and routed by a fleet of armoured motor-cars under the Duke of Westminster. The major operations of the Turks against

Egypt began with a daring attempt by Djemal Pasha to bring a force 150 miles across the Sinsi Peninsula to attack the Suez Canal. The force made the trying journey, and was in a position to attack Ismailia and the Bitter Lakes on the night of 2nd February, some is produced by the war to whose high 1915. As General Manhall, in command brillian could truly be spikled. Unbappily, training, was quite pregared, the assault was unanteen control of spinotes, consequently, unanteen, was quarter progress, on account of the first be died in the moment of victory, falling a a bulicross failure. By the 4th the first progress of the control of the first progress of the fir no further Turkish attempt was made during solidated, and farther advance was deferred 1915-the year of the Gallipoli campaign; till next morning. It was then too late, but in April, 1016, a Turkish advanced base because Turkish reinforcements had come was established at El Arish, on the Medi- up, and the British water supply had not. terranean coast of the Sinai Peninsula, and The promising opportunity came, therefore, another advance was prepared. This was to nothing. On 17th April, having got his delayed some time owing to Turkish diffi- pipe line and water supplies, as well as culties in the Hejaz, the Arab territory ruled another division from Egypt, General Murby the Sultan of Turkey on the Red Sea; ray made a second attempt. It failed, and and it was not till August that the attempt having cost a good many casualties was not matured.

On 4th August this well-equipped expedition, 18,000 strong, was encountered mand, and General Sir A. Murray was afterby the British forces (Australians and New wards succeeded by General Sir Edmund Zealanders, Yeomanry, Territorials, and the Allenby, who was sent out to command the 52nd Division) near Katia. The Turks were further operations when the definite conhandsomely beaten, and retired with a loss quest of Palestine was decided on. General of 4000 prisoners and 4 guns. Bir-el-Abd Allenby made no move of importance till was captured by General Sir A. Murray's 31st October, when he surprised the Turks force, and on 21st December El Arish was by making a sudden diversion towards occupied. This was the first step in the Beersheba, while demonstrating towards invasion of Palestine, carefully prepared by Gaza. The Australians rushed the town, the construction of "road and pipe and taking 2000 prisoners. Allenby's right being line". The desert column which struck thus secured he sent the 52nd Division next across from Ismailia to El Arish was led by day against a point between Gaza and the General Dobell: the mounted troops and sea, while occupying Ali Muntar. Allenby camel corps were under General Chetwode. was well supplied with guns, and with these A Turkish camp was captured at Magdabar, two vantage points in his possession shelled and on oth January, 1917, the desert column the Turks out of their positions. They reached Rafa, the port on the southern border hurriedly abandoned Gaza (7th November). of Palestine. The railway line was following and in disorderly flight were pursued through the advance, and by the middle of March it, Ascalon and Ashdod, and through Jaffa (16th too, had reached Rafa; and, with good November), whence a railway runs to Jerucommunications behind him. General Sir A. salem. The advance along the coast was Murray began his advance on Gaza.

concentric circles to the east to outflank the and Italy. town, while the 53rd and 54th Territorial

pursuit. Beyond occasional threats of raids positions won by the infantry were not conrenewed.

General Dobell was relieved of his commore rapid than through the hilly country Gaza was a disappointment. The British between Beersheba and Jerusalem, but force moved on the town, keeping near the when Hebron was reached on 7th December coast, on 20th March, and delivered an attack the fate of the Holy City was sealed. Fortunon the Turkish positions running along the ately it fell without a siege-though the Wadi Ghuzzee towards Beersheba in the Turkish forces made a stand on 8th Decemearly morning of the 26th. The Australian ber-and on 9th December General Allenby mounted forces, and the Imperial mounted entered it on foot through the Jaffa Gate, division and Camel Corps, moved off in two accompanied by representatives of France

The victory thus signalized could not Divisions attacked the main Turkish posi- immediately be followed up, because imtions near Ali Muntar, which was carried pending events in France and Flanders made after hard fighting. The Australian mounted it imperative that British commitments in forces had meanwhile made their detour, Palestine should not imperil further the and were fighting in Gaza itself when the position of the Allies in resisting the great main attack was suspended for the day. The German onslaught which General Ludendorff was preparing. At the end of March the range that runs from Mont Carmel to some of Allenby's advanced troops crossed Samaria. the Jordan, but the operations on that side Meanwhile, another infantry attack nearer could not be pressed with success; and some to the Jordan first pinned the Turkish Righth of the best divisions were peremptorily re- Army to its positions, and then broke it. called to France during the early summer. The Turks began at once to retreat, but it They were replaced by Indian divisions; was too late. The tremendous turning and by the middle of September the forces movement of the cavalry did not pause at had been reorganized, and held a line run- the passes of Megiddo, but debouched ning from Arsuf north of Jaffa to the Jordan through these into the plain of Esdraelon, crossing north-east of Jericho, and thence where lie Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee.



The Lost Phase of the Compaign against the Turks; map she advances in Mesopotamin and Palestine at the points reached on October 31, 1918

south to the Dead Sea. They were faced and in a day and a half was right across every by the Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies line of retreat of the Turks on the western by the Turkish Fourth Army east of the took Nazareth, which was the General Head-Jordan,

ing of 10th September, and was aimed, in escaped with not many hours to spare. the first place, at the costal sector where, behind the infantry, Australian Light Horse, armies. A cavalry movement by the Arab Indian Cavalry and British Yeomanry regi- allies of the British under the Emir Feisul, ments had been concentrated. Supported son of the King of the Hejaz, had repeated by a heavy artillery preparation the frontal on the east bank of the fordan the turning attack by the infantry pierced the Turkish lines, and through the gap thus opened the cavalry swept north across the Plain of Sharon to seize the passes at Megiddo in Tan

posted strongly in front of Sbechem, and side of Jordan. In the net of its advance it quarters of the German director of Turkish Allenby's great attack began on the morn- operations, General Liman von Sanders, who

> Far otherwise was the fate of the Turkish operations on the west. Avoiding the strong Turkish force at Rabboth Amman the Emir

²These had been largely organized by Temp, Col. T. E.

Amman on 29th September.

Haifa and Acre on the coast, and Tiberias into operation on 1st November, 1018. on the Lake of Galilee, were surrendered as The foregoing account of Turkey's interfast as the British cavalry could reach them; vention in the war would be incomplete and on 1st October the Australians had without a reference to the bloodthirsty and entered the capital city of Damascus. The cruel extermination of the Armenians in Arab forces under the Emir Feisul reached Asia Minor, which was engineered by Talaat there practically at the same time, and the and Enver, and more than any other action Emir was made governor of the city. Beirut of the Turkish Empire, put the Turks out-

cut the Hejaz railway line which runs north October General Allenby's troops had to Damascus at Deraa. The Turkish Fourth reached Aleppo. In a month which was Army had meanwhile lingered too long, crowded with wonderful happenings, the opposing the British crossing of the Jordan suddenness and the devastating effect of till 22nd September, and still offering oppo- the victory which Sir Edmund Allenby had sition at Es Salt on the 23rd. The resistance won in Palestine yet stood out as a landmark was their undoing, for they fell between the of the Great War. His work spelt the elianvil of the British infantry and the hammer mination of Turkey from the conflict, and of the Arab and Indian cavalry. To these perhaps more completely than in the case was added the scourge of the aeroplanes of any other combatant, the Turkish Emwhich, along the mountainous roads and pire's integrity was ruined on the stricken in the passes, bombed the retreat at will. In field of what, by one of history's fateful less than a week the Seventh and Eighth coincidences, is known as the field of Arma-Turkish Armies ceased to exist, and the geddon. The Turkish Cabinet, which renumber of prisoners leapt up by tens of placed that of Talaat and Enver in the middle thousands in a day. Some 10,000 of the of October had immediately entered into Fourth Army surrendered south of Rabboth negotiations for an armistice, which was signed at Mudros on 30th October, and came

fell a few days later, and before the end of side any future control of subject races.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BALKANS AND THE WAR

orifice of the volcano whose outburst over- while the Serbians, together with the of the Central Powers; Greece by the self- advances, an Austrian invasion of Serbia the Serbian Government withdrew to the next day. ancient capital of Nish. A small Austrian But two things were happening; the

The Balkan States, which were at the expedition crossed the Save and the Drina, whelmed Europe, became themselves part Montenegrins, endeavoured to "raise" of the debris of the explosion. Serbia was Bosnia. Neither attempt was very probroken in pieces by the force and treachery ductive, and after mutual withdrawals and sufficiency of a king who mistook military by an army corps was directed in three knowledge for political prescience; Roumania columns. The campaign at first went very by the defection of Russia and the ineffi- well for the Austrians, for the Serbians were ciency of her own military leadership; and none too plentifully supplied either with Bulgaria, the last to fall, by the action of a guns or shells; and though progress in the ruler whose greatest fault was that he was mountainous country was slow Valievo fell too astute to have a conscience. Serbia on 19th November; the Serbians were was the first to suffer. The bombardment pushed back at Lazarevatz on the 28th; and of Belgrade began on 20th July, 1014, and Belgrade had to be abandoned by them the

farther the Austrians pushed south-cestwards and maintained what he described as an across the mountainous country the greater attitude of neutrality. It was, in effect, little became their difficulties of supply, and the removed from unfriendliness to the Allies. Serbians, falling back towards their bases, In the summer and autumn of 1915 it began to receive new supplies of ammunition. became more and more evident that Bulgaria The first symptom of their reaction was was about to throw in her lot with the manifested by a counter-attack in the Central Powers. Serbia was convinced of mountainous region (and December): and it, and urged the Allies to allow her to the Battle of Rudnik, or the Battle of the attack Bulgaria. The demand was refused Ridges, which began next day, and which, because Sir Edward Grey hoped, and apwhile in appearance the desperate stand of a parently the Russian Foreign Office conretreating army, was in fact the deployment firmed the expectation, that Bulgaria would of the Serbian fighting forces under favour- be afraid to depart from her neutrality. able natural conditions. In this battle the Moreover, despite Mr. Lloyd George's Serbians were better led, and they proved plan for a Balkan Expedition, neither Lord better fighters. The moral of the Austrian Kitchener nor General Joffre would sgree forces left something to be desired, and in to it.1 A letter from Prince Hatzfeld 2 three days they were outfought and in in the summer of rors spoke certainly of disorderly flight, leaving behind them 15,000 Bulgarian intervention after the harvest: prisoners and ro guns. The Serbians and von Falkenhavn's book of memoirs followed up their victory without a moment's mentions the military agreement, which hesitation. Had they possessed any fleet also must have been made in the summer, of aeroplanes the Austrian divisions could by which Bulgaria was to supply 2 army hardly have got back at all; but in remnants corps (or armies), and Germany 4 divithey contrived to recross the Drina and the sions, for the invasion of Serbia. It is im-Save and evacuated Belgrade on 15th De- probable that King Constantine of Greece cember. Their invasion had cost them was unaware of this: but when, the Bul-28,000 prisoners and 70 guns.

bility of so reinforcing the Serbian army as mised to come to Serbia's aid in the event to give it the opportunity of undertaking of invasion by Bulgaria, he declined to do active operations against Austria-Hungary, so, in the teeth of the solvice offered by his It was an enterprise which for sound Prime Minister, M. Venizelos. strategie reasons France would not, and The experiences of the Austrians in inwere with the Central Powers, he drew farther and farther away from the Allies, You VI.

garian attitude having been openly defined, During rors the Serbian Government he was asked to fulfil the letter of the Greek continued to urge on the Allies the desira- treaty with Serbia, by which Greece pro-

Great Britain could not, undertake. The vading Serbia had shown the difficulties. Dardanelles Expedition more than absorbed Their plan had been to outflank the Serbian any resources which Great Britain should army in the west, or Save and Drina front, have spared; and the failure of it reacted while holding them on the Danube or on Serbian prospects in another direction. northern front. The plsn evolved by the King Constantine of Greece had played with German Head-quarters Staff was an elaboraa proposal to give Greek support to the tion of that, with another factor thrown in Dardanelles Expedition, but bad urged an (namely, a second outflanking attack by the attack, not at the point where the British Bulgarians on the eastern front) which was operations took place, but on the Turkish mathematically certain to effect the purpose. flank. His advice being disregarded he To make assurance doubly sure the German withdrew his support, and was, from a Head-quarters Staff was careful to supply military point of view, justified. Thence- much larger forces than the whole Serbian forward, being convinced as King Ferdinand army, to equip them well, and to see that of Bulgaria was also, that the winning cards German leadership and German methods

> Life of Lord Kitcheser, by Sir G. Arthur. (Maccrillan.)
> *Von Papen's papers. 107

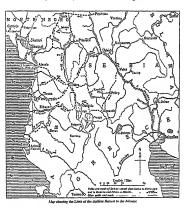
German forces employed consisted of 2 (10th November), and the wide flanking armies directed by General von Mackensen. Vishegrad force reached Ositza, so that the The First Army, under General Köevess, whole of the western or Little Morava valley was placed west of Belgrade with 2 de- was in Austro-German hands. The mistached divisions for a wide flanking move- chief was deepening every day. The ment. These were to travel by the old southern Bulgarian army under Teodoreff roads over the Save and the Drina. The had seized and held Vranje (29th October), Second Army was commanded by General on the railway below Nish, and then Veles. von Gallwitz, and it was the "shock" army From Veles one column had been sent to on which the brunt of the fighting was to Uskub, the strategic and road centre of fall, It was to cross the Danube east of Macedonia, and another to endeavour to Belgrade at Semendria and Ram and hook get in touch with the Vishegrad force coming itself to the Serbian main forces.

which they did with great tenacity and fierce- meshes. ness. Belgrade fell on oth October; at the The Franco-British attempt to cut a hole Serbians were enclosed in a wide loop.

informed the operations. The Austro- three days' fighting, captured Krushevatz down on the west. Thus the net was closing On 7th October, 1015, the combined round the Serbian army; and though it operation began, with results which were could not be drawn tight, General Teodonever in doubt. The Serbians could not reff ordered to send a column 15,000 strong retreat rapidly: but had to retreat fighting, towards Monastir to lessen one of the

crossings of Semendria and Ram the in it on the south side was made altogether Serbians could do no more than make the too late. A considerable force of British and German forces pay a heavy toll, and von French troops had made a base of Salonika, Gallwitz was able without great difficulty despite Greek protests against the occupato take Pozarevatz, and, deploying on a broad tion as a breach of neutrality; and on 14th front of 40 miles, to shepherd the Serbians October, after considerable vacillation in southwards in front of him. General Köe- Paris and London, a force under the leadervess and the 2 divisions farther west were ship of General Sarrail began to move up the able to join hands, and north and west the Vardar Valley, the British column, under General Mahon, marching on the right By the 20th another side had been added towards Lake Doiran, and the French to the loop by the intervention of the 2 towards Strumnitza. The frontier was Bulgarian armies on the eastern front. The crossed on 21st October, and the French first of these, under General Bodajeff, was came into collision with the Bulgarians on directed at the north-eastern corner of 23rd October near Strumnitza station. Serbia, so as to take the Serbians opposing Joint Franco-British actions were fought at von Gallwitz on the flank; the Second Geogheli with the Bulgarians on the 20th (the Bulgarian Army, under General Teodoreff, day on which the Germans took the arsenal was directed south of Nish, so that if the of Kraguievatz), but these minor engage-Serbians protracted their resistance too long ments had hardly any influence on the general their retreat to the south along the Vardar operations. There were a few days in which Valley would be cut off, and they would it seemed possible that a junction might be stand in danger of being wholly surrounded, made with the harried Serbians. The Meanwhile the extreme westward force, Serbians, retreating from Uskub, occupied a marching towards Vishegrad and Ositza, strong position on the Babuna heights outwould shut the door on the south-eastern side, on the road to Monastir, and held it side. These plans worked with no more while General Sarrail endeavoured to reach than the checks natural to warfare: there Veles. They fought a desperate battle on was little else to impede them. By 5th 4th, 5th, 6th November, and finally drove November Nish was occupied, the Bul- back the Bulgarians towards Veles. But garians (Bodajeff) and Germans were in though, as late as 8th, 9th, 10th November touch (7th November): von Gallwitz, after the French made progress from Grodsko to

Veles, the Bulgarian reinforcements were vernber. General Teodoreff's Bulgarian able both to prevent the French from ad- columns, meanwhile, were strung from vancing north of the Cerna river (which Tetovo to Katchanik to prevent any Serbian bends from Monastir to the Vardar), and to break to the south; and from Prileo to send a force to outflank the Serbians by way. Grodsko and Strumnitza fineluding the of Prilep. The Babuna positions were per- strong Archangel positions), to bar the force evacuated on 14th November, and the French from coming north.



and Prishtina was occupied on 28th No- Serbian army, crossing the frontiers of

Serbians were pushed west farther and The rest of the story, so far as the Serbians farther away from Sarrail's force, evacuating are concerned in it, is that of a terrible Prilep and Monastir (16th November) in retreat through the mountainous and far from turn. Von Mackensen had now nothing hospitable country of Albania to the sea. more to do than to bring down his column The Austrian columns had not been able to from the north as fast and as far as possible shut the door on them altogether, and the in order to shut the Serbian way of escape Bulgarians, following them up, could not to the west. Mitrovitza fell on 24th No- press on much faster than either the Austrians vember, with heavy losses to the Serbians; or the Serbians. By 7th December the Serbia. It lost many men, killed, wounded, looks the Bay of Cattaro, was with scarce a prisoners, starved in the retreat. Alto- pretence of resistance abandoned to the gether 50,000 men, as well as its guns and Austrians, who entered Cettinje, the capital equipment disappeared; but the relics of its of Montenegro, without difficulty. King army which reached Durazzo and Scutari Nicholas of Montenegro left his country and numbered some 100,000 unconquered and went to Paris. King Constantine of Greece unconquerable soldiers. King Peter shared could not follow the example of either the the retreat and reached Brindisi. Units of King or the Crown Prince of Montenegro. the Italian fleet, in some of the best organized and had to content himself with making naval operations of the war, succeeded in difficulties for the Allies, with whom it could transferring the Serbian soldiers to Corfu, scarcely be pretended that he was in symwhere they were re-equipped, rested, and pathy. M. Venizelos was powerless against made ready to take part again-as they did the Greek military party, which was openly with the highest credit-in the war for the pro-German. A climax came in the summer recovery of their country.

expedition gone, sustained and defeated a Bulgarians advanced on 15th August to strong Bulgarian attack on 27th November, Florina, south of Monastir, in the west, and but immediately began preparations for re- to the Greek port of Kavalla on the east. The tirement. The retirement was not left un- town was hypothetically defended by the molested, and a determined attempt was 4th Greek Army Corps, 2 divisions of made to isolate the French force by an which, nevertheless, surrendered without a attack on the British front at Lake Doiran. fight, and with all their equipment. The The British resisted stubbornly, but, though 3rd Division, whose action was typical of sustaining 1300 casualties, fell back to the the division of Greek opinion, joined the Vardar slowly enough to keep touch with the Allies at Salonika. French. Acting as flank guard to them they The attitude of Greece was still far from frontier.

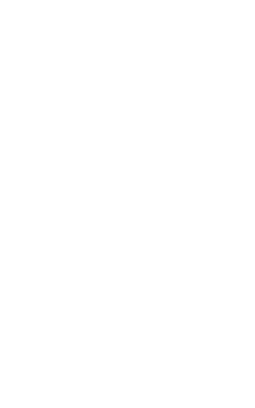
Greece had no wish whatever to act as host Seres and Demir-Hissar.

Albania or Montenegro, disappeared from to Vienna; and Mont Lovcen, which overof 1016 when, following riots directed Meanwhile Sarrail, the raison d'être of his against the Allied embassies in Athens, the

enabled the retreat to be made jointly, and satisfactory, and the danger to the Allies by no more than 5 machine-guns were lost in a stab in the back was in the autumn still far it. On 11th December the Franco-British from being illusory; but since a number of force administered a severe check to the Greek volunteers now joined the Venizelos Bulgarians following them up, and by the party and appeared to fight with the Allies. 13th were back in good order over the Greek General Sarrail was permitted in September to undertake an offensive against the Bul-Their position there was more satisfactory garians. His force at this time included in a military than a political sense. The French, British, Russians, Italians, Serbians, Bulgarians advanced to the frontier; the and Portuguese. A British column under Franco-British forces entrenched themselves General Milne pushed the Bulgarians back about Salonika, which was at that time a from the Struma River line, and in October cosmopolitan nest of spies, and in which drove them beyond the railway between

to any belligerent. The decided victory of This, however, was of the nature of a the Central Powers, the elimination of the holding action; the more active thrust was Serbian army; the withdrawal from Gallipoli, delivered by Sarrail's French and Serbian had reduced the value of the Allied stock divisions, with a Russian contingent. These greatly in the eyes of Greece and of Mon- steadily fought and manœuvred the Bultenegro. Montenegro, which had offered garians back from Lake Ostrovo and Florina, some opposition to Austria-Hungary while and then engaged them on the Kenali lines Serbia was yet undefeated, shortly followed which guard the plain of Monastir, and her out of the war, though in a very different stretch from the height above Lake Presba fashion. Prince Mirko of Montenegro went to the Moglena Mountains. The lines were





protected from an attack on the east by the and Bulgaria on the other; she had, while Brod group of mountains round which the King Carol was alive, her pro-German in-Cerna river flows in a loop. The chief fluence at Court and elsewhere, her patriots, credit of turning these lines rested with the among whom was Ferdinand of Roumania. Serbians. By 14th November the Bul- who believed that the country could not be garians recognized that they were untenable, emancipated while overshadowed by Hunand fell back to the Bistritza, which could not gar;; and her hard-headed politicians, who be defended. By 18th and 19th November were not alone in wanting to make the best the Bulgar-German forces were out of bargain possible for a little country whose Monastir also, and the Serbians marched wealth lay in her agriculture and her oilfirst into it, as they had every right to do, fields. In the end Roumania, which had though this implies no derogation of the long resisted the appeals of M. Take Jonescu. resolute fighting of the French and Russian ber pro-ally statesman, to take the plunge, units which had acted with them.

by no means to the content of the Serbians. Brussiloff had flung back the Austro-Hunwho were quite willing and eager to push on, garian armies in Galleia, and had opened a and who, under their own generals, were way to a junction with Roumania through probably at this period quite capable of doing the Bukovina. But negotiations and pour so. The Allies, however, were unwilling to parlers had been long in progress: and it was add to their responsibilities here. The assumed (in England and France at any rate), British and French were at this time con- that besides the 600,000 men whom Roufirmed "Westerners"; the Italians declined mania was said to be able to put into the further assistance, political as well as military field, she had guns and sufficient ammunition reasons influencing their decision. Some for them. It was stated at the time that her of these political reasons were reflected in 10 army corps of 20 divisions had been more the long hesitation in dealing firmly with than a year in training, and that ample King Constantine of Greece. The Allied supplies had reached her by way of Archfleets blockaded Greece in December, 1916; angel. The only commentary necessary on after an affray between Monarchist troops the validity of these statements is that the and the Allies on 1st December, the Mon- German Foreign Office was taken by surprise archist army was withdrawn to the Polopon- by the Roumanian declaration of war. The nesus, while Venezelist volunteers trooped surprise did not however greatly delay them to the Allies; and finally, on 12th January, in putting into execution a plan of campaign 1917, M. Jonnart, a very determined French against Roumania which was as altogether too official, having been given plenary powers, much for the strategists of the Roumanian King Constantine was induced by the Allies army, as the fighting organization and leaderto abdicate in favour of his son, Prince Alex- ship of the German divisions were too capander. His Prime Minister, M. Zaimis, able for the untried Roumanian subordinate shortly afterwards followed him, having officers. The rank and file of the Roufurnished M. Jonnart with the opportunity manian armies fought well and very bravely, for a mot which ran: "M. Zaimis, you talk but they were badly led, and there was no very well, but you talk too much, and your comparison between the artilleries of the words and your acts do not seree ".

herself. She feared Russia on the one hand into Transylvania, where it was hoped that

declared war on Austria-Hungary on 27th At Monastir General Sarrail remained- August, 1916. The moment was when combatants.

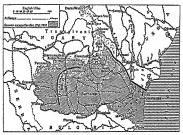
King Constantine's perplexities might not What seems now to have been the only unreasonably have been aggravated by the possible strategic movement for Roumania spectacle of the intervention of another was an invasion of Bulgaria by way of the Balkan nation, Roumania, in the war. Rou- Dobrudja, and a defensive policy for the mania, at the beginning of the war, may be front of the Carpathian passes. It was a said to have been fairly divided in preposses- policy that was not followed, and substituted sion in respect of the side to which to ally for it was an advance across the Carpathians This advance had a deceptive success; the But they quite well understood that their strategical frontier railway was in Rouhad been taken. It was also announced that Russian troops, with which was a Serbian unit, had reached the Dobrudja.

But they were by no means in sufficient force there to strike: and by the first week awaited them. A composite army of Bulgarians and Turks, with some good German

the presence of Roumanian divisions would Roumanians, and the intervention of their rouse the country to revolt against Hungary, army had been just in the nick of time, whole of the passes were secured in the first own main effort must be made against the days of September, and on the other side of Roumanian First Army on the Roumanians' the frontier Brasso and Petroseny were oc- western front: and sent a strong force with cupied. By 16th September the Hungarian a capable general to assail it. The General was von Falkenhayn, and had German manian hands; and on the Danube Orsova Head-quarters been influenced by any but practical considerations there would have been irony in the choice, for von Falkenhayn, the "Westerner", had just been superseded in France by the Hindenburg-Ludendorff combination, which had insisted against of September a most unpleasant awakening Falkenhayn's judgment on the need for active campaigns in the Eastern Theatre. Von Falkenhayn's opinions did not in any contingents and a German framework, as way diminish the energy with which he well as a German general of incomparable pressed his attack. On 10th September the driving power, General von Mackensen, Roumanians found themselves obliged to crossed the Bulgarian frontier on the Danube evacuate Petroseny; on the 26th they were side, and advancing eastwards with great assailed at Hermannstadt and the mouth of rapidity brushed aside the Roumanian the Rother Thurm Pass, and had to be withbridge-head contingents. At Turtukai the drawn with a loss of 2000 men and 20 guns. bridge-head was held by the Roumanian This was the first symptom of a disorder 15th Division. Von Mackensen's artillery which spread till it infected the whole of smashed the defences and overwhelmed the the Roumanian armies. The Second Rougarrison. The 17th Roumanian Division, manian army was compelled to retreat, in coming up from Silistria in aid, was similarly conformity with the First, through the overwhelmed and destroyed (6th Septem- central and northerly groups of passes, and ber). In less than a week von Macken- by 12th October von Falkenhayn had a sen had taken 25,000 men, including 462 small force in Roumania, 10 miles from officers, and 100 guns-a most ominous Campolung and the Bucharest railway. By beginning for the Roumanians. Von Mac- the 18th he had a hold on three passes, kensen gave them no time to recover. He Gyimes (north), Torzburg (centre), Rother drove back the Russian force advancing Thurm (south), and became free to choose through the Dobrudja, forcing them back his route of invasion. Ultimately he chose on to a line designed to cover the Cernavoda the southern passes; but before the effort bridge and Constanza. On 16th September was made there his colleague, von Mackenhe attempted to rush their lines; but in sen, had in effect decided the issue of the entrenchments the Russians and Roumanians campaign by breaking through the Russoand the devoted Serbs fought well, and a Roumanian lines in the Dobrudia (10th five days' battle left the lines unbreached. October), and capturing Constanza on the General Avaresco, the Roumanian Com- Black Sea (22nd), and the Cernavoda bridgemander-in-Chief, had hurried to the spot to head (28th). Thenceforward the defeat of superintend the resistance. It was more Roumania as described in Chapter XIII, was than time, but his presence was soon more only a matter of time. Bucharest was urgently demanded on the front he had abandoned without defence. Ploesti, the oil-field centre, followed (the oil wells were The Germans had well understood the destroyed by a British party under Captain psychology of the Bulgarians in sending Norton Griffiths; the Germans put them them under von Mackensen to attack the together again in about eight months): and

the Roumanian Government retired to Struma Valley, comprised the greater part

Jassy. General Sakharoff's Russians were of them. In 1918 General Franchet d'Esdriven into Bessarabia: but the Russians perey succeeded General Sarrail in supreme and Roumanians, falling back on the Sereth command. During the earlier part of the lines, were able to hold the defences, and year naturally no major operations were thereafter, till the defection of Russia cut the undertaken, though it was known after ground from under Roumania's feet, her midsummer that the Bulgarian forces were soldiers fought excellently. They held their very gravely dissatisfied, and were someground against such forces as the Germans thing more than war-weary. On 15th thought fit to deploy against them throughout September the moment came to General the first half of 1917. It was only after Franchet d'Espérey, as it had come to



amenium Campaign to the end of 1916

Lenin and Trotsky, the representatives of Marshal Foch, to strike the culminating blow placed under German control.

the Soviet power in Russia, had sold their at a shaking enemy. An offensive on a very country at Brest-Litovsk, between December wide front had been designed. The attack 1917 and February 1918, that Roumania, was divided into two halves: that of the thus deserted, was compelled to sign the French and Serbian on the left or Monastir Treaty of Bucharest by which-until the front, and the British and Greek on the tables were turned by the Treaty of Peace Doiran front. The British and Greek had at Versailles in 1918-the Dobrudia was a very trying experience, and for two days ceded to Bulgaria, the army demobilized, hammered in vain at the extremely difficult arms and munitions surrendered, and the and strongly fortified Bulgarian positions. products of the country, grain and oil, They suffered very grave losses in attacking almost impregnable positions, but the effect of their attack was to pen the Bulgarians here During 1017 the Allied armies remained and prevent them from sending reinforcecomparatively inactive; a Franco-Serbian ments to the western half of their front, attack north of Monastir, operations by where they were very much needed. The General Milne on the British front in the Serbian and French advance pierced the Second by the British and Greeks. On Turkey.

Bulgarian front between Dopropolie and 23rd September French cavalry reached Vetrenik, and by the 18th the assaulting Prilep; on 29th September Uskub. The division had reached the Cerna, 10 miles Serbians were meanwhile vengcfully purbehind the Bulgarian armies' lines. The suing what remnants remained as far as Nish, effect of this thrust, which was pushed and practically hardly stopped till they farther and faster (and with extraordinary reached Belgrade. But by the 26th the fury by the home-returning Serbians), was politicians of Sofia had had more than to drive a wedge between the First and enough of a hopeless cause, and had sent Second Bulgarian Armies (one of which delegates to treat with General Franchet had tarried too long in front of the British d'Espérey. On the 28th an armistice was and Greek attack), and eventually to drive signed at Salonika, agreeing to the demobilithe First Bulgarian Army headlong towards zation of the Bulgarian army, the surrender northern Serbia, while the Second Bulgarian of arms, munitions, transport, and railways Army retreated as fast as it could to Sofia. -the last of which were used by General The First was pursued by the Serbians; the Milne's force to move onwards towards

CHAPTER XXV

THE WAR IN GERMANY'S COLONIES

those regions comprised in the Near or them. Middle East had a direct bearing on the
If the future commercial struggle of the

Whereas the campaigns in Macedonia, the proper government of these regions in Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, and all the interests of the native races inhabiting

principal operations of the European War, world is to be in the Pacific the fall of the because they withdrew from the combatants German colonial possessions there may on the chief fronts either men or supplies come to be rated as the most significant of or both, the operations in Africa and the all. The largest of them was the eastern Far East were negative in influence. They part of New Guinea, or Papua, and its diverted hardly any German resources not 70,000 square miles were comprised under already existent there; though they occupied the name of Kaiser Wilhelm Land. Confrom time to time much of the energies of tiguous to it were the Bismarck Archipelago Great Britain. By way of compensation, and the islands of the Solomon Group. they brought in to fight for the Allies, in North of the Equator were the Ladrone East and South-West Africa for example, Islands, the Caroline Islands, German the military aid of the forces led successively Samoa, and Kiao-Chau in China. The by General Botha, General Smuts, and islands, apart from any influence or value General Deventer. Such aid was of great they might possess in the twentieth century, moral value to the Allied cause, and was formed a well-organized sphere of influence of the highest advantage to Great Britain from a territorial or naval point of view: historically and permanently. The same but in the presence of the dominance of the summation might be applied to these cam- British navy they were incapable of offering paigns as a whole. By the revelation of any prolonged resistance, Samoa was the first the wide-spread feeling against German to surrender, on 30th August, to a combined colonial government, they were damaging squadron of British and British-Australian to the German cause; and they raised the cruisers, with which was the French cruiser question, of the very greatest importance Montcalm. (The ships were the battleto the future of Europe and the world, of cruisers Australia, the cruisers Melbourne,

Psyche, Pyramus, and Philomel.) New Po- fertress therefore capitulated without enmerania in the Bismarck Archipelago was during the dangers of a siege which could the next to go (12th September), but here have only one ending. The surrender was a landing party had to fight the German logical if not heroic. garrison before the wireless station at Herbertshohe was taken. On the 13th the The smaller campaigns of Africa were Solomon Islands capitalated, and they were those in Togo-land and the Cameroons; followed by German New Guinea, where the and they differed a good deal in character, anticipated struggle did not take place. That in Togo-land occupied no more than Nauru, a detached island far to the east, a month: the Cameroon fighting was earried was the last to be surrendered, on 6th on in a desultory way for a year and a half.

November. doubts on the night of the 5th, and by day- mander, after trying to make terms, surlight the troops were ready to go forward, rendered unconditionally. They were not called on to do so, for as soon The resistance of the Cameroons was on as it was light white flags were discernible a vastly different scale. Germany had some floating from the buildings in the town. The 3000 native troops, with German officers

and thereafter the Germans succeeded in The more northerly islands and Kiao- withdrawing most of their fighting material Chau fell to Japan. The Mariana, Caroline, to the neighbouring territory of Rio Muni. and Marshall groups were surrendered at which is Spanish and neutral. The chief the summons of a Japanese squadron in the value of Togo-land to the Germans in war first week of Oetober: and were at once time was its wireless station at Kamina, and delivered by Japan to Australia. Kiao- in order to keep it, Major von Doring, the Chau Japan took and reserved for herself. German Governor, made the extraordinary The colony was Germany's principal com- proposal that Togo-land should remain mitment and pawn in the Far East. It has neutral. No notice was taken of the suga fine harbour, in which, at the outbreak of gestion. French and British forces entered hostilities were Admiral von Spee's squadron, the colony from east and west on 6th August, and a garrison of 6000 men to man the the British commander, Captain Barker, adequate defences. Admiral von Spee with- demanding its surrender. Lome, the port drew before the ultimatum expired. The and capital, was evacuated on the 7th, and Japanese invested the defences with a force the local commissioner on the expiration of some 23,000 men under General Kamio, of the armistice announced that part of the and brought up a strong siege-train of heavy Colony was surrendered. But Berlin was guns. With the Japanese force was a small strongly urging von Doring to hold the British contingent of South Wales Borderers wireless station at Kamina, and it became and Sikhs under General Barnardiston. The necessary to send an expedition to bring operations began on 27th August, despite him to reason. A Franco-British force a protest by China (which was indicative of under Colonel Bryant began to march up her future attitude at the Peace Conference), country from Lome on 12th August. It against the infringement of her neutrality, consisted of 2 companies of the Gold After a period of gradual investment en- Coast Regiment, later joined by French forced by the rains more active operations colonial infantry; and on the 22nd the force began on 25th September, and in a week came into collision with von Doring's troops the fortress was completely shut in. It at Chra on the railway to Kamina. The was not till the last day of October, however, German native troops put up a good resistthat the serious reduction of the German ance, but their commander, learning that defences was begun. The bombardment other French Colonial troops were advancing was very effective, and on 6th November the from Dahomey at his back, left his defences Japanese, drawing closer, were in a position and returned to Kamina to blow up the to launch a final assault in force. They wireless station. It disappeared on the 24th, captured a number of small outlying re- and on the 28th the German military com-

native forces, chiefly Senegalese and West Africans, numbered in all some 19,000. There were a few Belgians: the majority its ground till the situation bettered.

expedition under General Sir C. Dobell was withdraw over the flooded river. concentrated. It was a force of some 4500 The troops arrived late in September, and under the protection of the cruiser Challenger, and the gunboat Dwarf (which had survived a large number of perils from improvised torpedoes and mines), occupied Duala (27th September). General Dobell advanced into the back country eastwards to Edea, receiving the most energetic support from the naval forces, which forced their way in pinnaces and every form of light craft up the rivers, as the Germans under Colonel Zimmerman fell back eastwards on their as support to two marching columns, while the various columns which took Buea, Dschang are extraordinarily interesting in a story in itself.

offensives, and those on which they em- Colonel Gorges, at the head of Dobell's

and non-compussioned officers; but when barked were usually wrecked by the attitude war was declared Colonel Zimmerman, a of the natives, who acted as intelligence resolute soldier, summoned to the colours agents to the British, regarded by them as all the Germans in this very large colony deliverers from the Germans. The attack (which stretched from the Congo to Lake by Colonel Zimmerman on Edea was a costly Chad). He enrolled natives to the number defeat, and by mid-January, 1915, General of some 20,000 men, and had 3000 Germans Dobell's forces were strongly consolidated to stiffen them. Against these the Allied from railhead at Nkongsamba to this town. Meanwhile the French columns directed by General Aymerich, meeting difficulties and surprises not less than those which conwere under French command. The British fronted General Dobell, had occupied Carnot expedition which set out from Nigeria began Nola, Molundu and Marna. But the operamost unfortunately. Of the three columns tions were really too disconnected to effect the first, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mair, a valid clearance on the borders between was almost wiped out on 6th September. Nigeria and the Cameroons; and in February Another, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mac- 1915, General Cunliffe assumed command lear, was thrown back on its base at Yola; a of a column which marched on Garua. It third (Captain Fox), marching on Mora, was a strong post, vigorously and ably dewas held up there, but on the whole stood fended by Captain von Crailsheim, and it was not till 10th June that it surrendered This occurred when the more formidable after its defenders had made an attempt to

This success was followed by a serious men, mainly West African Frontier Force, set-back to a column which had been part partly Senegalese tirailleurs under French of the co-operative advance (to be made with officers at the Cameroon River estuary, the French) on Yaunde. One column (Colonel Haywood), was held up; another (Colonel Mayer), failing to find support from the French column which had been reckoned on (and which was able to make headway too late), had to fall back on its base, sadly reduced by fighting and dysentery. (5th June, et seq.) The combined movements on Yaunde had therefore to be put off till late September, after the rains. Three columns then set out under General Aymerich, General Dobell, and General Cunliffe. Banyo was taken after a desperate three days' base. A naval flotilla made its way thither fight (4th to 6th November), by Cunliffe's force, which thereafter marched towards other columns radiated like the spokes of Yaunde. It was 40 miles away on 8th a wheel from Duala. The experiences of January, by which time General Dobell's column, reinforced by Indian troops till it Nkongsamba, the railway terminus, and was 8000 strong, was converging on the same point, its march chequered with a great deal spite of the comparative smallness of the of hard fighting. The Germans, however, operations, and the defence of Edea, after realized that to stay was to be lost, for other it had been occupied by Colonel Mayer, is columns under General Avmerich and Colonel Mayer were also approaching: and The Germans attempted few counter- evacuated the town on 1st January, 1916.

column, entered Yaunde without opposition. inland; across the plateau runs the railway Colonel Zimmerman, with the Governor, which the Germans built in two branches Herr Ebermair, retreated into Spanish terri- to the coastal harbours, Luderitz Bay and tory, which they reached despite the efforts Swakopmund. Windhoek lies nearer the of the French to cut them off. By the be- northern branch, and along this railway was ginning of February they were over the Botha's main line of defence. A second frontier, and the last point in the German column was to move up the other branch Cameroons to surrender was the town of railway from Luderitz Bay; two others Mora, which had been very gallantly beld from the south-eastern part of the colony, by Captain von Raben.

The conquest of German South-West Africa, a colony in which the Germans had fantry, artillery, and Light Horse reached spilt a great deal of blood, and spent great Luderitz Bay on 18th September, 1914, the sums of money without adequate return, port surrendering next day. Other troops marked a step in the disintegration of the wholly volunteers, under Sir D. Mackenzie, German colonial empire, but still more the destined originally for Swakopmund, estabdestruction of any hopes they entertained lished a base at Chaukaib, and, under of destroying the integrity of the dominions Colonel Skinner, at Walfish Bay. Yet other of British South Africa. From the Allied British forces had landed at Port Nolloth point of view the campaign was most valu- (General Lukin), and had sent forward able because it placed on their side the forces prematurely a patrol to Sandfontein. This which General Botha brought into the field, was attacked and a relief force (Colonel and which were both British and South Grant) compelled to surrender-a very bad African Dutch in origin, so that any danger beginning which the British owed partly of a blow in the back from disaffected Trans- to the treachery of Maritz. vaalers or Cape Dutch was entirely removed. What that danger might hypothetically have by Colonel van Deventer (January, 1915), been is to be seen from the abortive rebellion and this officer speedily proved his ability led by Maritz and inspired by German in- by clearing the south-east portion of the fluence early in the war. The positive value colony. He advanced in three columns. of the South-West African campaign to with Colonel Bouwer and Colonel Berrangé Great Britain was that it bound to her such on his wings. Colonel Berrange's column, men as General Botha, a soldier and a states- which had the most trying march over some man whose title to greatness was never more 400 miles of desert with, at one point, more clearly displayed than in his prescience that than a hundred miles between water-holes. the freedom of his country and countrymen was some 2000 strong,1 and was further reincould be secured only by friendship with forced later by Colonel van Deventer's Britain and the British; and General Smuts. brother. The junction of these two, like As a military undertaking probably no leader the march itself, was one of the feats of the could have brought it to such swift and con- campaign, and reflected the highest credit spicuous success as General Botha, who had on the column leaders who carried it out the soldierly experience, the knowledge of in the face of every kind of resistance, and the country and conditions, and the quality on the tacticism, van Deventer, who planned of leadership which could best cope with the it. By 7th April the columns had taken difficult problems of so wide and untract- Kalkfontein (van Deventer's central column able a field of warfare. The greater part timing its attack on it to take place when of the colony is desert and bush, the desert Berrange's remarkable turning movement swept by sand-storms, and passable only on its flank had been completed), and by those who know its water-boles; the bush Warmbad (Colonel Bouwer). On the 11th dense and thorny. Windhock, the capital of the colony, stands on a fertile plateau "South Afreen Mounted, and Bochuzmland Riffer, Culli-

which they were to clear, were ultimately to join with it.

A force of 2000 men (Colonel Beves), in-

Maritz's rebellion was eventually broken

the whole force, which had, pending his of Karibib in the age-old crescent formation arrival, cleared nearly the whole south- which in generations of warfare the Boers eastern part of the colony, a district about had borrowed from the South African fightthe size of the North of England.

Garub (10th February), after a trying period rode on the right; Botha with 3 brigades of waiting; and Skinner's, not without (one of infantry under Brigadier-General adventure, to Swakopmund. On 11th Feb- Beves) marched in the centre. In less than ruary General Botha took command there; a week the force covered 100 miles and and following him came large numbers of arrived at Otyiwarango. He paused there the incomparable mounted Burghers of for a brief rest; and on 1st July, sweeping the Transvaal and the Orange. The force aside the slight resistance, the infantry endid not move out without due precautions tered Otavi, another extraordinary marching till the middle of March; then, employing feat. The Germans again proposed an the familiar Boer tactics, they drove the armistice: but a Boer is a match for any Germans from Riet and Pforte. The German in diplomacy, and the flanking ground was thus clear for the joint advance, columns never ceased their marches, one and Botha's Union troops, acting in concert of which (Brits') was designed to cut off with those of Mackenzie, fought a successful the enemy's retreat into Angola-land. Small engagement at Gibeon. General Smuts columns of Germans made various attempts (27th April), proclaimed the clearance of to evade the surrender which was their his area, and his columns, with those of certain destiny: but on 8th July General Botha moved up the Swakop River in Franke's forces. These had been entrenched columns spread over a very wide front, the from Otavi to Tsumeb, but while the Gerburgh, and Manie Botha; and on 5th May had entered the latter place, and General light railway with supplies was being swiftly east. them.

mandant, and Herr Seitz, the Governor, pro- only 1200, and not more than 140 died. posed an armistice (20th May), and offered .

General Smuts arrived to take charge of June Botha was ready: and he moved out ing races, the Zulus and Matabelc. Brits Mackenzie's force at length moved out to took one column wide to the left, Myburgh Botha, began their converging march. Botha received the total surrender of Colonel brigades being led by General Brits, My- mans parleyed, General Myburgh's column he entered Karibib without opposition. A Brits' right wing was moving round to the

built behind his forces. On 10th May his The Germans had been outmarched, and mounted burghers were outside Windhoek, out-peneralled, and out-thought. Botha had and on the 12th he rode in to receive its taken great risks, but he understood his surrender. The Germans had withdrawn enemy, and he could depend wholly on the the bulk of their forces to the north, leaving courage and resource of his own mena small one to the cast of Windhoek, and matchless guerillas, capable of fighting, by this time quite realized that they were marching, and enduring. The Germans unable to cope with the superior mobility had employed some 5000 men, soldiers and and forcefulness of the Union troops, or the civilians, and found them useless. Botha discerning generalship of the men who led commanded some 20,000 in all, including those on the railways and communications. Colonel Franke, the German military com- The total casualties of the campaign were

terms. General Botha, who knew that he The campaign in German East Africa was, held the enemy in the hollow of his hand, of all that were fought, the most protracted: refused to agree to anything but uncondi- and the leading spirit of its resistance on the tional surrender, and refitted his men for German side, General von Lettow-Vorbeck, the round-up. They needed refitment; for had a career which the two soldiers matched the trek across country from Swakopmund against him, General Smuts and General van to Windhoek had been one of the most Deventer, must in their minds have comtrying marches of any campaign. On 18th pared with that of one of their own race,





GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD, K.C.S.
From a photograph by Bassano



FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT ALLENBY, G.C.B. From a phongraph by H. Walter Barnett



LIEUT-GEN. SIR STANLEY MAUDE, K.C.B.



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR A. J. GODLEY, K.C.B.

From a photograph by Ellion & Fry

General De Wet. In the end he fied across liminary to attacking the port from the sar, Second of the name was not account and an analysis of a second of the Fortiguese border, despoiled the Fort while you Lettors Verbock assumed it on one corruguesse corruer, toespouses our con-vance ven season sea

offeres or state one amountain, on us one most see, out we Assupered whe Armistics continued to clude the Allies, forced to run by the appearance of superior the Attanance Community or some one came, across to that of one appearance or automatic through the colony which he had ranged with British need forces, and was bearing (and such resource was desired of his collegues afferwards destroyed) in the Rufe River. and the Askeri splitten on 100 December, and all the approaches on Monthau were

von Lettow-Vorbeck, then a colonel, had a force of 250 Germans, though there were 3000 Germans in the colony whom he could recruit, and a number of others at Dar-es-Salaam on the railway, as well as some 600 who escaped from the Königsberg, destroyed in the Rufigi River. To these he added natives, and Arab volunteers: and at its maximum the force may have reached 25,000 men, 2000 of them Europeans. He had 60 guns and machine. guns, and a good supply of ammunition, which he was able to replenish in a number of mysterious and unexpected ways. The reduction of German East Africa was therefore a serious

business, and more than any other campaign in Africa drew upon the British resources. The first step taken by Great Britain gave no indication of the task. The light cruisers, Astraea and Pogasses, bornbarded Dar-es-Salaam, and

distinged the visible station. The Germans checked sill the survival of British reinforces

superpicts to reliable both on and and see ments, mainly from India. The British at The specimen accurate soon on man houses, means, manny room accurate the contract of the contr Under allege and captured Tarets on the their earn), before that the computer of

Vigeness common and appears above our one and any process and appears and appe some of some land cause of the land of the the Figure, Jing et Mombas, a s pre- indeed, a chilia Germa demon square willing to come to terms. But the military strand posteries and the Amistee was baving defeated very thoroughly an attempt

made by Major-General Aitken to take 1916, when General Smut's columns under of the eolony's defence.

use. On and about the Victoria Nyanza been won. and Lake Tanganyika, and on the borders The railway was coming up after the the campaign the methods with which he move on 15th August. was familiar, namely those of avoiding frontal attacks on prepared positions and compelling Smuts put into operation the main part of their evacuation by well-contrived turning his plan, which was to move eastwards movements. The conditions of transport in towards Handeni, and then, turning south, German East Africa, the bush, the swamps, to march towards the railway in a line parallel made these tactics less swiftly effective than to that taken by van Deventer. This was in South-West Africa. To help him he had the advance which the Germans anticipated a considerable force very largely recruited and had made preparations to resist. But from South Africa.

Tanga from the sea, at once took charge General Stewart (who advanced on 4th March over the desert towards the rear of During the remainder of 1914, and the Kilimanjaro), General van Deventer (who early months of 1915, the Germans were was to outflank Taveta), and General Tighe content to strengthen their positions and to (who was to hold the enemy's front), were continue their raids. The most serious of set in motion.1 On 8th March van Deventer these was on Yasin, held by Indian troops- compelled the evacuation of Taveta; on the and held to the last-under Colonel Ragbir 13th, after a stiff fight at Laterna-Reata Nek, Singh. Only 20 survivors cut their way he captured Moshi, the terminus of the railout: and with Yasin went Vanga and the way from Tanga. On the 21st, continuing Omba Valley. A blockade of the coast was his advance, he seized and held Kake, and instituted in February, but two blockade- with General Stewart converging on the runners got through it in the ensuing twelve same point, the Kilimanjaro region fell like months, and brought ammunition to you a ripe pear into General Smuts' hands. The Lettow-Vorbeck, of which he made the best first British success of the campaign had

of Nyasaland and Rhodesia, many engage- forces, which were now re-organized into ments were fought during the years in a new divisions, among whose commanders species of give-and-take warfare in which appear the names of those who had done neither side could claim any great advantage. so well under General Botha. The 3 divi-. In April General Tighe arrived to assume sions were 1st (Major-General Hoskins); command, and by the end of the year the 2nd (Major-General van Deventer, with British Government, yielding to his repre- Brigadier-Generals Manie Botha and Bersentations, determined to treat the campaign range); 3rd (Major-General Brits, with as a serious one. His force was largely Brigadier-Generals Enslin and Beves). It recruited, and General Smith-Dorrien, who was the 2nd Division under van Deventer had left France, was asked to command it. that General Smuts determined to send into He was taken ill on the way to assume the the heart of the colony, where its arrival command; and after a further delay General would be unexpected. The device was Smuts was with some difficulty induced to completely successful. The columns conaccept it in his stead. General Smuts verging, or outflanking, according to the arrived at Mombasa on 19th February, 1916, necessities of the situation, cleared the main and began to organize measures to deal with Usambara country in the first half of June; the well-armed German force which, under other small columns dealt with the Eastern von Lettow-Vorbeck, now had 2000 white Usambara (where naval detachments took men and 14,000 natives. General Smuts ap- a hand). Tanga was occupied on 7th July proved General Tighe's plan, which was to and the railway and district up to Koroewe occupy the Kilimanjaro region by converg- cleared. The navy took Pangani and, coning advances; and he himself brought to tinuing to clear the coast, captured Baga-

Meanwhile, in the middle of May, General

The organized campaign began in March, forces began operations on the Colony's borders.

sea took Dar-es-Salaam.

Cabinet in London, relinquished the com- the Armistice. mand to General Hoskins, having broken the German power of offensive and driven him to the outskirts of the colony.

Von Lettow's forces had fallen to some 8500, of which about 1100 were whites, and 'The Teetse fly disease carried off nine-tenths of them.

again General Smuts took them by surprise they were to continue for long to offer resisby sending a strong column (Sheppard and tance. Their main bodies were strongly Beves) in advance along the Pangani River. protected in the Kilwa hill-country, half-By 15th August the coast had thus been way between Dar-es-Salaam and the Porcleared to Bagamoyo, and 100 miles of tuguese frontier, with smaller bands farther railway cleared; a force under General south, able to take any opportunity of raid-Northey from Nyasaland had reached ing Portuguese territory. A very heavy Malangali; Belgian and British forces were rainy season prevented any operations against to the south of Lake Victoria. Between van them till the beginning of June, 1917, when Deventer and the British force below Han- General van Deventer, to whom General deni lay the Nguru Mountains, dominating Hoskins had handed over the command, the railway and the great road. Before undertook them. He began a parallel adadvance could be made along either, the vance in two columns, and met, fought, and mountains must be subdued. They were drove back von Lettow-Vorbeck's forces at cleared by General Smuts' 1st and 3rd Narongombe (19th July). There was another Divisions, while van Deventer marched pause, followed by other concerted movefighting through the bush towards Mpapawa ments and occasional brushes, in which, (12th August), and Kilossa (22nd August), after the Belgians had occupied Mahenge a wearying, half-rationed march. On 24th (9th October), General van Deventer drove August General Smuts tried to force von the German commander into the Kitangari Lettow-Vorbeck to give battle at Marogoro, valley (20th November). An effort by but again he escaped. Thus fighting delay- cavalry to envelop him failed, though von ing and harassing rear-guard actions, but Lettow-Vorbeck was forced to abandon his ever retreating, the Germans were gradually guns in order to escape into Portuguese and painfully squeezed out, till on 3rd territory. His colleague, Colonel Tafel, September a combined attack by land and who had valiantly and cleverly held off Northey's column, for long made an effort Thus the larger part of the colony had to join him, and, evading a local British been cleared, but the effort had been very column, under Colonel Shorthouse escaped trying to the white men, as well as to the to Nevala. On 15th and 18th November horses1 on which General Smuts depended van Deventer, fighting his last engagements for the mobility of his columns. Conse- with von Lettow-Vorbeck in German East quently, during the last three months of Africa, completely broke his resistance, cap-1916, some 12,000 of the British white turing 376 Germans and 1100 Askaris, and troops were taken out of the country, and entered Nevala on 21st November, where, their places were taken by the King's six days later, Tafel unwittingly walked African Rifles and the Niperian force which straight into the trap and surrendered. On landed under General Cunliffe in December. 1st December General van Deventer an-The country was divided into two parts, the nounced that German East Africa was clear east and centre occupied by General Hos- of the enemy, but, as mentioned on p. 285, kin's division; the west by General van you Lettow-Vorbeck continued at large with Deventer's division, which co-operated with his main body in Portuguese East Africa General Northey. On 16th January, 1917, through the greater part of the following General Smuts, who had now been ap-year, finally forcing his way into Rhodesia, pointed to attend the meetings of the War and surrendering there under the terms of

CONCLUSION

Such in outline are the features of a war which, beginning on a remote frontier of the Balkans and Austria-Hungary, left hardly If the new world was not set up at any nation of Enrope outside its devouring the Peace Conference, much of the old fury, and drew into it peoples and territories world has been destroyed. On 28th Novemfar beyond. The narrative is susceptible of ber, 1918, the Kaiser signed his formal abdimuch expansion, for the history of each cation of the Crown of Prossia and the Gernation's share in it is one which is linked man Imperial Crown: and the German with that of the world, and of the world's Republic under President Ebert, a shoecivilization. Whether the peace that was at maker, was set up in the stead of the old length reached is what its authors, of whom German Empire. The Hapsburg Monarchy M. Clemenceau, Mr. Lloyd George, and Mr. was no more; and President Masaryk was Wilson were the chief, strove to make it- elected first President of the Czecho-Slovak just and enduring-only the future can show. Republic. Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Greece

ment of such ramified structure, and so of 1920 still weltered in a Bolshevik autodependent for its fulfilment on factors that gracy. Yet despite the disappointment of are yet hidden from many who took a part many hopes, Europe and mankind may still in framing it, that its consequences can trust that all the bitterness and sacrifice have neither be foreseen nor indicated. It rests not been vain. In one empire at least that for its accomplishment on the design of a hope shines bright; and it perhaps has League of Nations which was the ideal of received no better or simpler expression the President who brought America into the than in the letter addressed to King George war, thereby seeking not merely to end it, by the British Prime Minister at the signing but to end all wars.

The Peace Treaty is, in itself, an instru- rejected their kings; Russia at the beginning of Peace.

28th June, 1919.

La Galerie des Glaces du Château de Versailles.

Mr. Lloyd George, with his humble duty to Your Majesty, has the honour to announce that the long and terrible war, in which the British Empire has been engaged with the German Empire for more than four years, and which has caused such suffering to mankind, has been brought to an end this afternoon by the Treaty of Peace just signed in this hall.

He desires on behalf of all the Plenipotentiaries of Your Majesty's Empire to tender their heartfelt congratulations to Your Maiesty on the signature of a Treaty which marks the victorious end of a terrible struggle which has lasted so long, and in which Your Majesty's subjects from all parts of the Empire have played so plorious a part

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